



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600042800K

34.

239.









THE  
**PREDICTION.**

"Consternation and astonishment fall upon the lonely one."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:  
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.

1834.

239.



**LONDON:**  
**CREMER, PRINTER, CORNHILL.**

## CHAPTER I.

It was some time before Katheren revived; her affectionate friend was bending over her with looks of anxious solicitude—"Oh, Doctor Elwin," she cried, "where have I been? Where am I?" She burst into a passion of tears.

“ You shall soon learn the hows and the wheres,” answered he, soothingly; “ at present obey orders; your nerves are unstrung, your pulse beats high; I know you are wilful, and must be frightened into obedience.”

**"Only a word," she exclaimed; "my aunt! Beatrice!"**

"I have sent George to inform them you are slightly indisposed." He pressed his finger to his lip, drew the curtain of the bed on which she lay, and left her.

Katheren was indeed contumacious; instead of submitting quietly to the doctor's directions, she softly raised herself, and endeavoured by the indistinct light which her closed curtains admitted, to discover where she was, but it was impossible to discern anything beyond the stately couch on which she reposed, whose lofty canopy of black velvet, terminating in pointed drapery, was fringed with gold. She dared not draw back the curtain, for fear of encountering the reproachful glance of her kind friend, and, sinking on her pillow, sought to recall the events of the last hour; but she now suffered under mental syncope; her mind's eye was darkened.

Exhausted by fruitless efforts at recollection, she fell at length into unquiet slumber, and starting from a fearful dream, with a piteous appeal for mercy, she awoke. A tall, majestic female, dressed in a nun's habit, was bending over her. Harrowed by the phantoms of her dream, which recalled the real dangers she had so lately encountered, Katheren arose, and kneeling to the recoiling figure, again wildly supplicated for mercy.

The wan countenance of the nun became more

deadly pale as she gazed on the beauteous pleader, who with flushed cheek, and eye of fevered brilliancy, continued to pour forth incoherent entreaties.

"I was scarcely prepared for this," faltered Miss St. Elmour, as she took the burning hand of Katheren, and tried to sooth her ravings.

The gentle voice was anodyne to the poor girl's excited and disordered imagination; clasping the hand of her mild protectress, she passively submitted to her authority, and resigned herself to sleep.

Several days elapsed before Katheren was restored to complete consciousness. "Surely that is the voice of Beatrice," she whispered, when awaking one morning from a deep and refreshing slumber, her mind and body seemed restored to health and elasticity. She softly drew back the curtain, and discovered at the farther end of a spacious apartment, two figures seated in a window's deep recess; one of them, her throbbing heart announced, was Beatrice, in the other she recognised the sweet and gentle being who during the fitful period of her illness had hovered near her couch, like the spirit of peace, had smoothed her pillow, and emulated in vigilance, even the watchful care of Doctor Elwin. "Beatrice!" said Katheren, softly; the welcome call was quickly answered; the sisters were locked in each

other's embrace, while Miss St. Elmour looked on them with contending and almost overpowering emotions.

"My aunt?" cried Katheren.

"Is as well as anxiety for you will permit."

"Is she not here?" enquired the astonished Katheren.

"She has heard of you every day."

"Content with enquiries! never seen me!"

"You would not look thus indignant," said Beatrice, "if you had witnessed her distraction, on hearing of your indisposition; her dreadful suspense."

"I must see her to-day," cried the impetuous Katheren, "I am quite well, I shall dress at once."

"You will first see Doctor Elwin," said Miss St. Elmour, advancing.

"Oh Madam," exclaimed Katheren, "I can at last express my gratitude, my ——." She seized the hand which was extended towards her, and burst into tears—"had it not been for Doctor Elwin, for you!"

"You had another, a higher, a surer protector," said Miss St. Elmour, "have you forgotten Him?"

The sisters were struck with awe at the sublime expression of the large dark eyes, now cast upwards. "I feel the consolation of reliance on 'im, and I would impress it."

"He heard my agonized petition," cried Katherine; "twice was my life in peril, and ——"

"In peril!" interrupted the trembling Beatrice, "the wretched woman then?——"

"Aimed at my life," continued Katherine; "my poor faithful Don! I saw him fall defending me. Oh Beatrice! my heart died, when I heard his mournful cry! all power, all hope forsook me; nature could bear no more, what followed I know not."

"Your hat," said Beatrice, "which Tade picked up, gave a clue to the direction you had taken; better acquainted with the intricacies of the path, he left the doctor and his friends to follow as they could, and rushed forward, urging Don to his utmost speed, who bounded over every obstacle and quickly outstripped his master; Doctor Elwin when he gave me this account, added, that Tade seemed to feel (as he would, himself, have expressed it) 'a misgivin' o' mischief,' for notwithstanding the utmost exertions of the doctor and his companions, he had burst open the cottage door and seized the wretched woman ere they arrived."

"You were then conveyed hither," added Miss St. Elmour, hurriedly, "and became my care.— But could you discover from this unfortunate woman's ravings what her incentive was, to such violence? She has for some time suffered under



occasional aberration of intellect, but has hitherto been harmless."

"My faculties," replied Katheren, "were so suspended by terror, that I could not pursue her wanderings; her morbid fancy seemed powerful as the wand of Prospero, conjuring up at will, visionary shapes, saints or demons; of these last, one, she said—as expiation for meditated crime—goaded her to the sacrifice of some being, real or imaginary, who bore my features and my sister's name; it was vain to plead innocence; indeed I scarcely comprehended the accusations—to disclaim or expostulate only served to encrease her frenzy; you will smile perhaps at my simplicity in thus reasoning with a maniac, but her madness had 'the oddest frame of sense, such a dependency of thing on thing, as ne'er I heard in madness;' her intellect seemed partially injured, not destroyed, and her insanity, at first, was only perceptible in the delusion which identified me with the object of her hatred and revenge."

"And have you no knowledge, no suspicion, who it is you so wonderfully resemble?" said Miss St. Elmour, emphatically.

Katheren started. The question recalled the almost obliterated remembrance of the emotion which her features had excited in Doctor Elwin and the priest, and furnished some clue to the mysterious infatuation of Ileen. "Alas," she

said, "it is my misfortune to induce unfavourable prejudice by casual resemblance to some person, to whom I can have no other affinity, for before I came to this country, such resemblance was never remarked; if you also behold me with dislike!—" A sob of regret choked her utterance.

"Heaven guard me from such injustice!" exclaimed Miss St. Elmour, pressing the hand of Katheren.

"Can you describe this unhappy maniac?" enquired Beatrice.

"Impossible sister; 'so withered, and so wild in her attire,' so horrible, and yet so affecting—I had almost said, so interesting; twice did she win me from my dreadful apprehensions, once by the deep pathos of her lament for some regretted object whom she almost deified—angelic—martyred, she described him—and again——." Katheren stopped abruptly—the hand which held her's became cold and clammy—the features of the recluse were distorted; she raised a silver cross to her lips, and hurried from the room.

"Alas," cried Katheren, "I am fated to wound; even that gentle being shrinks from my touch."

"It was your story that affected her dear Katheren; you must be silent on the subject of that unhappy woman's ravings; I have heard of her; she is sister to our Susan, and I think I can solve

every difficulty that perplexes you, save one—but this is no time for explanation; let me assist you to rise, that you may be ready (if Doctor Elwin approve) to return home; I shall rejoice to leave the castle.”

“And I shall almost grieve to part with that interesting nun,” said Katheren, “she has been my nurse, my comforter; even you Beatrice, could not have watched me more assiduously: but—was it only this morning you came hither?”

“Katheren your heart tells you, I would have come before, unless prevented.”

“Prevented!”

“Yes; you will now listen to my narrative. Young Mr. Elwin’s detail of what had happened, though imparted with the utmost caution, excited terrible apprehensions; I would have set out for the castle instantly, but he persuaded me to await the arrival of his father; our anxiety during this interval was agonizing; my aunt’s mind seemed quite upset, she paced the room in a tumult of emotions, I trembled for her reason. Doctor Elwin did not arrive till evening, and she had then worked herself into frenzy. He assured us he had left you asleep, and under most watchful care; but my aunt heeded nothing; she knelt, entreated him to restore her child, her Katheren; said, her calumniator had instigated him to tear you from her, that she knew he had been preju-

diced against her, and would join with her persecutor, in endeavouring to deprive her of both her children. Doctor Elwin tried to tranquillize this alarming ferment, but her language became more unconnected, fever ensued, and for three days she was delirious."

"My dear aunt!" exclaimed Katheren.

"Could I leave her sister?—At length she was restored to us, and I would have flown to you, but our friend seemed unaccountably perverse, positively interdicted such a proceeding, amusing us from day to day with accounts of your convalescence; perceiving however that my aunt was relapsing into nervous excitement, I determined to write to Miss St. Elmour, and request permission to see you; but our obstinate Incomprehensible, prohibited even this, and at length promised to express my wishes himself.—Need I describe with what joy I, yesterday evening, received a summons to accompany him hither—it was nearly dark when we arrived; I cannot account for the chilling depression with which I approached this edifice, looking doubly gloomy 'mid the palpable obscure of twilight. We left the carriage at a short distance, and as we walked through a winding pathway which led us to a platform, an indescribable sensation of awe stole upon me, checked the eagerness of my advance, and clouded the joy with which the hope of soon seeing you had filled

me. My companion was silent and thoughtful.— At length we reached the entrance; the melancholy interior corresponded with the external gloom; the servants glided to and fro like spectres, with noiseless step, mourning habits, and countenances which seemed never to have softened into smiles. Doctor Elwin conducted me into an apartment on the ground floor, and introduced me to a lady in whom I instantly recognised the majestic figure I once caught a transient glimpse of, in the island of Innisfallen. The singularity of her dress and the grandeur of her mien were too marked to be forgotten; she examined my features for a moment, but it was with the sweet solicitude of a friend, not with the rude scrutiny of a Karwin; then bending forward, she kissed my forehead. Cheered by a reception which so delightfully contradicted the anticipation this stealthy visit had excited, my reserve vanished, and I ventured to request, that I might see you, instantly. She took my hand and led me hither, unclosed that curtain, motioned me to silence and permitted me to view you for a moment in peaceful repose; then, conducted me to an inner apartment, and, with an emphatic benediction, left me. The gloom of this solitude contrasted cheerlessly with our own sunny habitation, as did the figure and deportment of Miss St. Elmour, inspiring awe and reverence, with my aunt's sweet and winning manner. Again de-

pressed, I looked around; almost every apartment in the castle had been often described to me by Mrs. Susan, who, as you know, lived here for many years, and I fancied I could recognise, from her description, that the rooms occupied by yourself and me, had once been the sleeping and dressing apartments of the Earl and Countess, which were abandoned at the death of the latter; those rich and sombre hangings, that dark wainscot, those deeply sunk windows, though faintly discernible by the dim light of a taper, were nevertheless so impressed upon my mind, by the good dame's minute and often repeated delineations, that my fancy, flying to the days of other years, led me a fantastic tour, and I started, expecting to see some bygone shape appear, as a door opposite to that which leads to this apartment was opened, and a female entered, who, after placing refreshments on the table, silently withdrew. Had I been transported to the marble palace in the kingdom of the Black Isles, there could not have reigned stillness more profound; a couch which had been previously occupied by your nurse, Miss St. Elmour, was now assigned to me; I stole on tiptoe to your bedside, comforted myself with the assurance that I was not alone, and in a world of spirits, thanked heaven for your healthful sleep, then sought repose, scarcely daring, again, to survey the sombre limits of my chamber. Notwithstanding the flutterings

of excitement, I sank into slumber so profound, that the sun had for many hours lighted up the lovely woodlands, which lay before my windows, ere I woke. You still slept. A servant summoned me to breakfast; I would have enquired for Miss St. Elmour, but the spell of silence now seemed to operate on myself; I followed my taciturn conductress, and my solitary meal was soon despatched. As I sought my way along the corridor, to this apartment, a distant door was opened, and I descried our friend Doctor Elwin; he did not perceive me, but stood in musing attitude, his hand resting on the lock: with noiseless tread I advanced towards him, but, as if from sudden recollection of something forgotten, he turned abruptly and retreated along the gallery. I pursued, anxious to consult him respecting your removal. He stopped again, before a door at the extremity of the passage; intent only on reaching him I sprang forward, too late to prevent his entering the apartment, too soon to escape the sight of a ghastly, emaciated figure, wrapped in a loose mantle, and extended on a couch, which stood in a canopied alcove; there was an impatient expression in the bloodshot eye, a stern contraction of the indented brow, a scornful inclination of the upper lip: he seemed to scoff at the decay which had thus rendered him so dependent upon others; the worn cheek, the hoary head, the shrivelled hand—"

"Who are you describing sister?" interrupted Katheren.

"The miserable victim of destructive passions, the unfortunate Earl of Dunane. Oh, Katheren! I am acquainted with the story of his life; some strange fatality has hitherto prevented me from imparting to you this melancholy tale."

"But you were standing at the door of the Earl's chamber," impatiently interrupted Katheren.

"So sudden, so unexpected was the sight of this pitiable object," continued Beatrice, "that it fixed me to the spot. Doctor Elwin, without looking behind him, was slowly closing the door, when a wild ejaculation from the recumbent figure startled him; he turned hastily—'Miss Mornington!' he exclaimed. 'Who!' shrieked the invalid, starting from his couch. 'For heaven's sake retire Miss Mornington,' said Doctor Elwin. Ashamed of an inadvertence which might be construed into intrusive and impertinent curiosity, I had advanced a few steps, and, 'spite of the doctor's entreaty, still lingered with the hope of being permitted to explain that my offence was involuntary, but this was prevented by our friend, who interposed his person, as if to shield me from observation. 'Stand off,' cried the sick man, in a hoarse and hollow tone, waving aside my good-natured guard. 'Come then,' said Doctor Elwin,



solemnly: he took my hand and led me forward—  
‘Kneel Beatrice, kneel, while I present you to—’  
—‘Stop!’ burst from the convulsed lips of the Earl, ‘how dare you Sir, taint the air with that hated name, how dare you!’ He fell back overpowered. Oh Katheren! it was frightful to behold the passions still in full strength, holding the mind subject, while the decaying frame could scarcely crush the worm! Pity, and involuntary respect for his age and rank, concurring with an emotion indefinable, though perhaps natural, had induced me, in obedience to my kind adviser, to bend the knee before this shadow of mortality, but, shocked by his language and the rancorous ire which glared from his sunken eyes, I should have fallen had not Doctor Elwin supported me. ‘My lord you will destroy yourself; remember this innocent girl has done nothing to justify such a reception.’ The remonstrance of our kind friend was only effectual to renew the storm; the Earl, extended his palsied hands—Katheren! how my brain whirled, when I heard—‘May the curses of a loathing heart!’ may——’ He stopped and gasped for breath, as if to concentrate in some still more dreadful malediction all the malice of his soul, a figure I had not before perceived advanced from a distant corner of the apartment. What a countenance! what a contrast! the body, bent to the earth by age, was supported by a staff, but

the head 'mild, pale, penetrating,' was raised to heaven. Oh! how beautiful was the meekness of Christianity, opposed to the arrogance of the unbeliever; he held the sacred symbol of his faith before me.—'Man! would'st thou invoke judgment on thyself!'

"Away!" cried the Earl, "away with that type of superstition; think you there is aught in such mummary, to deter me from ——"

"Heaven in its violated majesty smote the scoffer, using his own intemperance as the mean of punishment; the attenuated frame could no longer sustain the fury which now swelled the shrunken veins, blood gushed through the lips which moved to anathematize a fellow-creature, and he fell back senseless."

"Dead!" exclaimed Katheren, who had hitherto been silent from astonishment.

"I left him insensible," continued Beatrice; "Doctor Elwin hurried me away, entreating I would not mention what had occurred to Miss St. Elmour, tranquillizing my apprehensions, by assuring me the Earl's paroxysm would produce no fatal consequences, and ascribing his outrageous conduct to delirium; it may be so, but I feel more than suspicion that some secret tie connects us with this family."

Katheren endeavoured to conceal apprehension

with the smile of incredulity. "You have wandered within the limits of my air-built dominions, and are in the regions of romance Beatrice, infected by the fiction inspiring gloom of this castle, you subtilize the natural, or at most the extraordinary, into the mystic and marvellous; I may as well imagine that other affinity, than mere resemblance, connects me with my mysterious prototype. Were we indeed allied to the Earl of Dunane, why should my aunt conceal it? Another day in this chateau, vapourous as the cave of Trophonius, and I shall find you deducing extravagant corollaries, from the most simple events, in time perhaps discovering our propinquity to O'Donoghue himself."

Beatrice saw that her sister's gaiety was forced, that her latent vanity had prompted her to ridicule the supposition of their being allied to a person who evidently disowned them, and she fearfully anticipated the mortification Katheren's proud spirit must endure at a discovery which, she doubted not, would one day be made.

The entrance of Doctor Elwin prevented farther discussion; the gloom on his brow was not even dispelled by the sight of Katheren, who flying towards him, poured forth in a breath, her thanks, and her supplications for permission to return home—"I am so anxious to see my dear aunt,"

"And so grieved to leave Miss St. Elmour," added Beatrice, "her joy and her sorrow are in proportion; but my dear Sir how is——"

"Better, much better," interrupted Doctor Elwin, hastily, "I must attend to my other patient;—still weak and tremulous," he continued, taking Katheren's hand.

"Only the flutter of delight," she replied, "the extacy of renovated health."

"I would consent to your quitting the castle to-day," said Doctor Elwin, "if ——"

"What a fearful if!"

"If you would consent to remain for a few days under my immediate care," he continued, hesitatingly.

"Not return to my aunt! impossible!" cried Katheren; "if I do not see her to-day, disappointment will have a worse effect than removal."

"Your divinity of course deserves all this devotion," said the Doctor.

"Sir!" said Katheren, with a look which plainly expressed, 'even you are not privileged to speak irreverently of her.'

"I would not willingly endeavour to diminish that respect, which is, perhaps, justly bestowed."

"Perhaps!" interrupted Katheren, now almost indignant.

"Come, come," said the poor Doctor, in some confusion, yet endeavouring to appear jocosely, "I

perceive my tongue is, as my wife says, 'unlucky' this morning; your majesty shall dispose of yourself, and me—say, are we prepared to return to the cottage?" he added, addressing Beatrice, who had remained a silent and astonished auditress of this dialogue.

"Quite! quite prepared!" exclaimed Katheren, forgetting her displeasure, while her more retentive and tenacious sister quietly asked, whether Doctor Elwin would approve of their paying Miss St. Elmour the compliment of a farewell.

Katheren was now in the effervescence of buoyant spirits. "Your ladyship's honor don't think I'm goin' to go, widout payin' my respects, may be."

"Does Doctor Elwin approve?" said Beatrice gravely.

"Be not more unforgiving than your sister," exclaimed the doctor, offering his hand: the smile of Beatrice was serious, her manner still tinctured with reserve.—"I have seen that hand extended to my aunt, with the frankness of perfect confidence and esteem," she said.

"It will again be thus extended," cried Doctor Elwin impetuously, "if, will, alone be wanting; but I must return to the Earl for a few minutes; Miss St. Elmour too, must be informed of our arrangements. What! is my patient prescribing

for herself?" He turned to Katheren, who was writing.

"This is for my kind nurse," said she folding the paper: "Miss St. Elmour quitted us this morning so abruptly! I know not why, but I do fear that it pains her to look upon me."

"She would feel less pain in looking at, than in bidding you farewell," said Doctor Elwin.

"Am I then never more to see her?" enquired Katheren with tearful eyes.

"Never includes so very much," said Doctor Elwin evasively; "shall I be the bearer of that note?" He was quitting the room.

"And what excuses am I to make?" cried Beatrice detaining him, "for my involuntary intrusion; that terrible scene will haunt me."

"Think of it as of a dream," interrupted Doctor Elwin; "be satisfied that no ill consequences will ensue; at least to——" He stopped abruptly. "Miss Mornington will you promise not to mention this incident to any one? not even to Mrs. Jermyn? Believe me," he continued, observing that Beatrice was about to interrupt him, "it would only unnecessarily distress her." He looked around, and perceiving that Katheren had strolled into the dressing room, added in a low voice, "be silent likewise as to the escape of that unhappy woman, our search has been fruitless—her grandson Tade has also disappeared—were I sure of your sister's

safety I should not regret Helen's flight; you seem surprised, but this unfortunate creature has been for years the object of my anxiety and care; her singular story involves some memorable events in the life of one I dearly loved; she saved that person from a violent and disgraceful death, and by doing so, sacrificed character, competence, friends, all! Her mind, brooding incessantly on her wrongs, lost the force it once eminently possessed; reason fled. Deeply interested in her fate, which I could ameliorate only by professional assiduity—for she obstinately refused pecuniary assistance—I attended her through her unhappy malady, and she recovered; but occasional hallucination mocked my skill, and I learned from her sister that insanity is inherent in the family; hers seemed so peculiarly harmless (consisting in forming to herself a visionary world of spirits, with whom she would at intervals hold imaginary converse) that I never thought of confining her. Depending on Tade's watchfulness, and promise of informing me should her mania become violent, I had for some time ceased visiting a spot which revives the most painful recollections." He paused but Beatrice continued in attitude of attention. "To have revealed her calamity," continued the doctor, "would have been to invite the vengeance of one who has pursued her with unrelenting malice; her insanity would have afforded him a plea for depriving her

of her last poor privilege—freedom—unfortunate woman! could I betray her?—my compassion was indeed imprudent, and might have been productive of consequences, terrible even in idea!—I dare not enquire into the particulars of that outrage which reduced your sister to the state in which we discovered her.—I dare not ask from what we rescued her.—But I can imagine the cause of Ileen's frenzy; her disordered imagination, annihilating time and possibility, mistook your sister for the fatal object she resembles so wonderfully, that I myself, when first introduced to her, started at what I considered an optical illusion, which mocked me, by representing with exact fidelity, and in all the freshness of youth, a face I had not seen for three-and-twenty years."

"Of whom do you speak?" demanded Beatrice, eagerly.

"Is it possible that you do not know?" exclaimed Doctor Elwin.

The expression of his companion's countenance was a sufficient reply.

"Did you never hear that your sister resembled her mother in a remarkable degree?"

"On the contrary," replied Beatrice, "I have heard my aunt say that no two faces were more dissimilar. She has often indeed examined the features of Katheren, with the earnest gaze of wonder, ejaculating, as if unconsciously, 'Astonishing!—



marvellous !—Our good Snelder also would look at my sister with peculiar meaning, and mutter to himself half sentences, indicative of surprise, sometimes—of concern."

"Be assured Miss Mornington," said Doctor Elwin, "that Mrs. Jermyn is acquainted with the person your sister resembles, and for reasons—good no doubt—is silent on the subject." The doctor's manner and words were equally equivocal.

Beatrice, piqued, though unable to assign a motive for her slight irritation, said firmly, "Then I will not listen to what she wishes concealed."

"I must order the carriage," said Doctor Elwin abruptly. "Surely," thought he, as he quitted the apartment, "I have been imposed upon, purity alone could have formed such principles."

Katheren slowly advanced from the inner room; "Beatrice," said she, "I have been thinking of that wretched lunatic; entreat Doctor Elwin to prevent all persecution; I dare not speak on the subject myself, for I feel here—" she laid her hand on her heart, and stood silent and mournful.

"You are ill, dear Katheren," said Beatrice, anxiously.

"No, sister, but I feel a weight, a depression, I had almost said a presentiment of evil; coming calamities project long shadows," she added, smiling languidly, "you will retort on me as a visionary, yet even at risk of being considered weak

and fauciful, I will request that from this moment, you never revert to circumstances which I would forget, or to mysteries which I have no inclination to penetrate."

Beatrice looked doubtfully at her sister, unable to determine whether Katheren's dejection proceeded, from that lassitude which is consequent on the over excitement of a feeble frame, or, from her having overheard the conversation which had just passed, relative to Iken. She perceived that Katheren shrank with sensitive horror from all explanation which might tend to mortify her pride, or reduce her to dependance on those, whose acknowledgment of her claims might be compulsory; preferring happy ignorance to unpleasant certainty; her own well regulated mind, accustomed to believe 'whatever is, is best,' to rely on itself for support, no extrinsic diminution of consequence, no loss of worldly importance could affect; formed to grace the higher circles, satisfied to move in the humbler, no visions of ambition, no apprehension of degradation, ever excited to unquiet stirrings, her even spirit; for Katheren alone was she anxious, inquisitive and restless; her penetration, sharpened by affection, had discovered in her sister the dawnings of those lofty imaginings, those proud aspirations which she feared would look for their fulfilment only in a splendid destiny: content, not glittering circum-

stance, she supplicated for herself; but would Katheren be satisfied with calm enjoyment? Buried in these reflections she perceived not the equal absorption of her companion, who leaned against the window frame, and seemed to gaze on vacancy. At length Katheren suddenly enquired whether her sister had heard anything of Moreland?

Beatrice replied in the negative, wondering what chain of ideas had led to this question.

"Nor yet seen Emma Elwin?"

Beatrice smiled. "I have heard of her—something you will rejoice at."

Katheren's looks expressed curiosity.

"Yet perhaps I should not raise expectations which it may grieve you to find disappointed.—Miss Jefferson was my informant."

"Dear Beatrice will you keep me in this agony? has Emma heard? is Sir Patrick?—or perhaps Mrs. Moreland?"

"Nay," said Beatrice, gravely "if your fancy wanders so very far, I had indeed better prevent disappointment by assuring you, my information by no means relates to Mr. Moreland or to any of his connexions. I have informed you that Mr. Elwin is arrived; he is accompanied by a young man whom Miss Jefferson exalts into a divinity."

"Well," said Katheren, impatiently.

"You do not wish me to repeat Miss Jeffer-

son's description of this celestial creature," said Beatrice.

"I thought your intelligence related to Emma, and not to a stranger," cried Katheren rather angrily.

"And can you find no link in your fertile fancy, which may connect both?" enquired her sister.

Katheren looked the personation of apprehension and suspense.

"Did I believe Miss Jefferson, who generally brings every thing to a dismal or delightful conclusion," continued Beatrice, "I should say they are to be married immediately, but ——"

"Married!" repeated Katheren, "impossible, Emma cannot be so capricious, so low minded——"

"As to marry a divinity Katheren! You have very exalted views for your favourite; seriously," added Beatrice, perceiving that her sister was not in mood for trifling, "I have no guarantee for this, save Miss Jefferson, who would obtrude on me, herself and her prattle when I was very averse to the admission of either; for my thoughts were resting more on you, than on Emma, or Mr. Morgan."

"Morgan!" interrupted Katheren peevishly, "I hate the name."

"I had better not pursue a subject which appears to annoy you," said Beatrice gravely.

"Forgive me Beatrice; I will soon explain to you—but I cannot banish the idea of Emma's duplicity."

"I will not usurp a confidence," said Beatrice, sorrowfully, "which you seem to think only due to Miss Elwin—at least do not reproach your friend for a concealment which was compulsory; she could not communicate otherwise than by letter the secret of her engagement, (if any indeed exist) for I believe Mr. Morgan's arrival, did not, by more than a day, precede your——." She hesitated.

"That person must have been with Doctor Elwin and his son when I was rescued," said Katheren; "do you think I shall be teased by impertinent enquiries relative to my extraordinary adventure?"

"Doctor Elwin's prudence has prevented all publicity—he can answer for the silence of his companions—Tade for his own sake will be discreet—a slight accident has been the alleged cause of your detention here."

"And you are, really, of opinion that there is no certainty of Emma's ——"

The entrance of Doctor Elwin interrupted Katheren's enquiry.

"I think I heard my daughter's name," said he; "but I have many agreeables to communicate respecting my own family, which I hope will

soon reanimate that pensive countenance." He presented Katheren with a note, which she took unconsciously, pondering on the doctor's words.

"It is from Miss St. Elmour," he said, perceiving she stood in apparent abstraction, looking at the unopened paper.

"Indeed; I feared it was from Emma."

"Feared!" repeated Doctor Elwin; but Katheren was now engrossed by the solemn farewell of the recluse.

"Think of me Katheren," wrote Miss St. Elmour, "as of one, whose thoughts, even amidst the stillness and solitude of her most sacred retirement, will often turn tremblingly to the trying stage on which it is your destiny to tread, and who, although she bends in humblest submission to the will of that Providence which, in its wisdom doubtless, decrees our separation, must still confess the weakness that compels her to regret it—I had thought myself weaned from sublunary attachments, but you and Beatrice have drawn my thoughts to earth again.—Heaven guard you both.—MARY."

"Come," said Doctor Elwin, taking the hand of Katheren, "I will not permit the indulgence of any emotion which may retard your recovery; in mere gratitude you must exert yourself; my wife and her *chef de cuisine*, Priscilla, are preparing to make the 'welkin dance' in honor of

my son's arrival; they only suspend the display of their skill until you are sufficiently recovered to join in the merrimaking. George grows impatient, but it has been decided in full conclave, that there is no doing without you—and—we will present you to such a paragon!"

"A needy poet! the son of a Welsh parson! I think Mrs. Elwin described him," said Katheren.

The doctor was confounded; he looked at his divinity, and began to apprehend, she might not prove quite celestial. Her countenance which a minute before had been clouded by grief, was now lighted up with indignation. "I was ignorant till now, Miss Mornington," he said, gravely, "that you considered poverty a degradation, and the son of a clergyman however gifted, incapable of inspiring esteem."

"Your paragon appears to have completely superseded poor Henry Moreland," observed Katheren, contemptuously.

The doctor's good-humour and good opinion of his favourite returned together.—"Jealous!" he exclaimed triumphantly, "Jealous! for Henry: now would I cheerfully undergo the purgatory of again (for a moment) thinking you haughty and arrogant: if Harry might hear that speech, might mark that angry flush; be assured he would quit, presto, prestissimo, the banks of the Arno for those of the Fiesk, a Medicean—"

"For Hibernian Venus," added Katheren, promptly, while her arch look and playful, dis-embarrassed manner, completely puzzled both her hearers.

"The carriage waits Sir," said a servant, who seemed as if he had started from the dingy panel, the man's solemn countenance and sable habit, checked the dawning hilarity of the party—they followed him in silence. In the corridor they encountered Mr. Karwin, who bowed profoundly, then quickly turning, proceeded to the passage which led to the Earl's apartments. Doctor Elwin looked after him for a moment with a countenance entirely divested of its usual benignity. The sisters were disquieted, they knew not why, and when the castle's gloomy battlements had faded from their view, they felt as if relieved from a chilling incubus: Katheren's thoughts would still revert to the 'melancholy recluse, but all griefs and perplexities were forgotten when pressed to the throbbing bosom of her worshipped Mrs. Jermyn.



## CHAPTER II.

Creams, crumpets, jelly-glasses, buns and custard.

"HERE'S a predicament," gasped Mrs. Elwin, as she walked up and down her 'drawing-room,' with open palms, extended fingers, and flushed countenance; ever and anon stooping to pick up various shreds which strewed her Kidderminster, some of which adhered with provoking tenacity to its variegated surface. "Was ever anything so unlucky! a party, and Priscillar out of the way, no one to share my terrible responsibility!—When will my troubles terminate?—Only think Lucy,"—turning to her daughter, who now entered—"that unaccountable boy!—his father, without giving me due intimation, was so indiscreet as to mention that Miss Mornington was quite recovered, and behold you, Master George gives three cheers, throws down the scrap-basket, containing Emmar's

odds and ends, and dances 'the sailor's shuffle,' as he calls it, on my poor carpet! That boy presumes on my partiality, his very language savours of the sea, I must be more on my pronokum, as Bob Jefferson says, 'Great use there was, sending him to college, when he comes home to rig puppet ships, and spends all his time making tackling for models.' I wish he'd tackle to his books; we shall see him a sailor after all."

"Heaven forbid!" said the alarmed Lucy.

"Amen!" ejaculated the trembling mother, 'scared at the sound herself had made;' "to see such a handsome creature daubed with nasty tar. —I never saw a sailor's hands that were fit to shake my door mat."

"But you have not yet revealed the cause of your perplexity," said Lucy.

"Perplexity indeed!" cried Mrs. Elwin (her face again reddening, as her mind reverted to her dire dilemma) "after having kicked all the nap from the centre of my carpet, Master George very coolly seizes that unlucky inkstand (which you will always leave on the table Lucy), writes a dozen notes to two dozen people, aye more, for many have sons and daughters—the Jeffersons for instance—and the Dawsons—and the ——. But my poor head is so confused — so addled—it really is, quite ridiculous!"

Lucy in despite of her affection for her mother, could not help secretly assenting to this last assertion.

"So," continued Mrs. Elwin, "notwithstanding all my remonstrances, Patrick is summoned by that provoking boy, and despatched with the notes, just as I wanted his assistance to prepare for the guests."

"But," observed Lucy, "unless they were invited, there would have been no necessity for preparation."

"Surely I don't want you to tell me that Lucy; but you are so prim, so over accurate."

"The more calculated to assist you in this dilemma," said Lucy, smiling.

"Can you do fifty things at once?" exclaimed Mrs. Elwin.

"Better do one, at a time, well," replied her consistent daughter.

"All very proper if time could be purchased like tape, but when millions cannot stop its progress, and multitudinous affairs oppress, why many matters must be crowded into brief space—'Joshua was a favored man!'"

"Let us at least commence operations, dear mother, shall I give orders?"

"Orders!" interrupted Mrs. Elwin, "to whom? for what?—where's the use of orders when the

head that orders all, is out? fifty to one, whatever we order, Priscillar will counter-order when she comes home."

"Shall I send for her?"

Mrs. Elwin looked at her watch.—"No, she promised to be back at half-past ten, and it is now a quarter past; bless me! shall I never clear the carpet of these unlucky worsted ends? one would think they were drawn together by that attraction of cohesion, which you sometimes torment us with." Lucy smiled. "Nay," said Mrs. Elwin, "I don't know why two worsteds, as well as two corks, or two polished glasses—that's Priscillar's knock I'm certain!"

Lucy looked into the passage.—"It is only Betty."

"Tell her then," said Mrs. Elwin, "to take the short cut to Mrs. Horrogan's, and order home to-day, the sheep's tongues that were bespoken for Thursday—bid her fly! for if Priscillar arrive, and find all her hands (as she calls them) out of the way—gracious! she had best not go at all."

"Let me send for Priscilla; do my dear mother?"

"That would be the climax of bewilderment indeed," cried Mrs. Elwin, "send one loiterer to summon another—though I should not say so of Priscillar who is always punctual—ten minutes still to the half hour!"

"Where is Priscilla?" enquired Lucy.

"Gone to Mrs. Mullins' to bespeak eggs and cream for Thursday, little thinking they would be required to-day; she chose to go herself, although such a distance, because Mrs. Mullins is rather a favorite of hers—frugal and thrifty, the only one of the lower order here, who does not live in an atmosphere of filth—indeed Priscillar has put her up to several economical secrets, for which the good woman is much obliged, and so she always lets us have the best of her dairy and poultry-yard.—Do you know Lucy?" continued Mrs. Elwin, lowering her voice, "Priscillar informs me, that misguided woman at the cottage still visits the young man, who lodges at Mike Mullins'!—what a scandal!—I dare not again mention it to your father, he is so infatuated by that family; nothing can open his eyes."

"Surely it would be better not to listen to servants," said Lucy colouring.

"I cannot look on Priscillar as a servant Lucy, she followed me to a strange country, adhered to me through poverty and distress—"

"Enough! enough, dear mother!" cried Lucy.

"Besides she is so careful, so managing," continued Mrs. Elwin, "do you think we could make the figure we do without her?"

A ponderous tread on the stair cut short this panegyric—"Oh! Priscillar, we were longing for

your return—I must ask you to prepare a supper for this evening?"

"Supper!" said Priscy, "are you shanny?—Who's will may do that; I won't. You needn't figner so Ma'am, all my 'rangements were made for Thursday—'tis a thing unpossible!"

"But Priscilla," remonstrated Lucy.

"Lauk Miss Lucy, don't look so bumptious, 'tis no use magging o' me you know—I'm just like the cheese of sweet Suffolk—

'Knives can't cut me, fire can't sweat me,

'Dogs bark at me, but can't eat me.'"

"The people are all invited, Priscillar! What shall we do?"

"Do as they do at Hoo Ma'am, put 'em all off;" cried factotum, coolly.—"The fowls arn't fatted; the milk's frowy, the butter's fusty; there's no keeping o' nothing this briling weather; no company to-day."

"Gracious goodness," exclaimed the perplexed mistress, "how George will rave!"

"Who?" vociferated Priscilla, "Master George, did you say? That's a cock of another colour.—We'll see what can be done!" She leaned her bristly chin upon her clenched fist, cast up her moon eyes, and looked occult—Mrs. Elwin gazed suspensive at the oracle,

"I have hit it," said Priscy, striking her iron hand upon the polished table with such force as to make Lucy jump, and Mrs. Elwin cast a furtive glance of solicitude on the shining superficies, which surpassed the foreign varnish of more modern times; "I have hit it," she repeated—"fowls, sweetbreads, salmon, sago, slough-kaun, sausages, sheep's tongues, palates, lamb's liver, lobsters, fricassees, and freeli frailies."

Lucy laughed. — "What are freeli frailies Priscilla?"

"Kickshaws, Miss; tossups, froth, frippery, whips, fizzes and moonshine."

"But the fowls not being fattened," began Mrs. Elwin.

"We'll fill 'em out with forcemeat," quoth Priscy.

"Stale milk, fusty butter, no cream," continued Mrs. Elwin.

"Send Betty to Mike Mullins; we'll have plenty in a whiff," responded Priscy.

"It is almost eleven," observed Mrs. Elwin, "scarcely eight hours for such multifarious preparations."

"Little knocks, rive great blocks," cried Priscy, whose spirit seemed now to rise superior to every obstacle, while Mrs. Elwin, like a skilful commander, artfully pointed out and exaggerated each difficulty, in order that when the fight began, her

forces might 'screw their courage to the sticking place.'

"Is Betty a stirring person?" enquired Mrs. Elwin.

"Only come this morning Ma'am, a bit ungain at present, but what of that, I'll make her jump—where there's a will, there's a way."

"Remember," said Mrs. Elwin emphatically, as the fieldmarshal was quitting the room, "remember Priscillar I say, that more flies are caught with a spoonful of honey, than with a gallon of vinegar.—Priscillar is rather particular as to her deputies Lucy—tries three a month."

"Lauk Ma'am," cried Priscy, returning, "I'm feared you must whip the cat at dinner; Master George will look for a dumpling, so that must be made; then, there's a make up of mutton hash, and a mouthful of fricassee, all well enough if it warn't for the parson."

"Pooh! he's nobody," said Mrs. Elwin.

"He don't fill out his suit for a certainty," quoth Priscy, "still he's well spoken, and well looking too, though not to be named with Master George."

"Poor fellow," said Mrs. Elwin, "you must toss him up a cutlet Priscillar; he has got a churchyard cough, and will never live to comb a gray head, as Mrs. Jefferson says."



"He walks upon German flutes sure enough," observed Priscy, retiring.

"German flutes?" repeated Lucy.

"Suffolk for spindle shanks Miss;" she closed the door.

"The most elegant form I ever beheld," ejaculated Lucy.

"Too slight," observed Mrs. Elwin, "graceful, no more, not to be compared with a figure I once saw; but Lucy be on your guard, don't extol this young man before Emmar, I really think she likes him."

"And if the attachment were mutual," said Lucy, "I should rejoice at it."

"Have you a mind to frighten me out of my wits, Miss Lucy?" said Mrs. Elwin majestically. "My beautiful Emmar indeed, united to the son of a poor parson, immured in a hut 'mid the Welsh mountains, milking goats all the morning, and at noon sitting down to toasted cheese, and a tankard! —monstrous!" Mrs. Elwin satisfied with this sounding declamation, paced up and down the room and fancied herself a Cicero.

"What a lively picture of rural life you have sketched," said Lucy, laughing, "a few more masterly strokes, and I also, fly to Snowdon."

"A poor consumptive creature," continued Mrs. Elwin, "lank as a gaol mouse!"

"Dear mother ! what exaggeration," interrupted Lucy ; " his danger exists only in your apprehension, for I shrewdly suspect you are as much in love with him, as any of us."

"'Pon my word you give your tongue unwarrantable license, Miss Lucy ! what would Doctor Elwin infer from such a speech?"

"Nay there I am on sure ground ; my father would only approve of the attachment."

"Emmar is not gone with George and Morgan, is she?"

"I wish she could have been persuaded to accompany them," replied Lucy sorrowfully.

"Don't provoke me Lucy, it would kill me to have her married to Morgan—I that hoped to see her Lady Moreland."

Lucy turned pale as death. "If you would not wish to see her wedded to her grave mamma, you will breathe no such anticipation ; would to heaven she were the wife of Morgan !—forgive me, but Emma's peace of mind, is dearer to me than her exaltation ; I too, had ambitious hopes for her once, but they are all destroyed ; now, I only wish to see her cheerful—to save her life."

"Her life !" repeated Mrs. Elwin ; "are you bent on driving me distracted to-day Lucy ? why she seems quite well ; she smiles as much as ever."

"'Tis patience smiling at grief," cried the al-

most sobbing Lucy. "Mother, enquire no farther, but if you think that, in time, my sister and Mr. Morgan may become mutually attached, do not grieve at it."

The door at this moment was softly opened, Priscilla cast an enquiring glance around, and then entered on tiptoe, drawing from beneath her apron a roll of paper.—"See here," she cried, "what Betty found in the parson's room; I wanted a sheet of paper to singe my fowls, so she fetch me this, thinking 'twas as good as whity brown, the mauther! I was going to wallop it up, and stick it under the skillet, but the sight of that scarecrow made me bounce—if 'tis a witch I'll burn her."

"Burn her!" ejaculated Mrs. Elwin, "good patience! 'tis Miss Mornington." She threw the roll indignantly from her. "Those girls at the cottage are fated to cross me in every way; preparing philters for poor Morgan too."

Lucy could not help smiling at the inconsistency which now began to regret what had before been despised, merely from the apprehension that another desired to appropriate it.

"'Tis a witch then in earnest," cried Priscy, clutching the paper; "I'll settle her hash for her, she shall burn or I'm not Priscy Crumpet."

"Stay," said Lucy, "let me look at that drawing; the likeness is certainly striking—still it

must be a fancy sketch, else who can that grim Sycorax-like figure be, standing near the prostrate female? There are also other forms indistinctly traced—'tis an imaginary group; the resemblance is indeed wonderful; but be assured it is accidental."

"Hitty missy, as the blind man shot the crow," cried sapient Priss.

"If Mr. Morgan had seen Katheren Mornington, he would have mentioned it," said Lucy; "tell Betty to place the paper where she found it Priscilla."

"That horrid old hag won't haunt us Miss Lucy? You must know I'm rather quakish, ever since I corned them hams on a Friday."

"Priscillar," said Mrs. Elwin, "had you not better return to your department; all will go wrong unless you preside."

"Pat should be after his plate," said the orderly, "you haven't sent him all the way to the cottage to be sure! he's never worth his wittles when he's overworked—no more of Sampson than Solomon in him."

"The doctor promised to go to the cottage himself," said Mrs. Elwin.

"Dawdle might have travelled the town over since then," cried Priscy, "a lazy varment; if any one else had sent him but Master George—" She made her exit in a fume,

“There is really something in George which fascinates every body,” said the gratified mother; “even Priscillar (of such very methodical habits) bears being put out, by him.”—So saying Mrs. Elwin retired to join her coadjutor, leaving Lucy to muse on this beloved brother, who indeed merited such universal toleration.

In disposition George Elwin resembled both his sisters: ready with Lucy to resent the wrongs, and with Emma to weep at the woes of the meanest of his fellow-creatures; nobody, as Mrs. Elwin said, could withstand him. His honest laugh, his humour, (sometimes in truth rather waggish) his warm genuine feeling, and invariable good temper, added to a certain acuteness of perception, which qualified him without hypocrisy to adapt himself to all characters and classes, rendered him the herald of frolic to his family and friends. Still this pliancy was perfectly free from servility—he could condescend to the knavery of flattering venial foibles to enhance their absurdity, but he would neither jest with, nor bend, to arrogance or turpitude. When quite a boy he was permitted in an ‘unlucky’ hour to accompany a brother of Mrs. Elwin, who commanded a sloop of war, in a short cruize, and long was this marine adventure the theme of unqualified regret with the anxious mother, and long too was it ere George could look with complacency into his old friends Homer

and Virgil, save where they told the wanderings of Ulysses or the voyage of the pious Eneas. Time however reconciled him to the fiat of paternal solicitude, and he sacrificed his inclinations to the earnest entreaties of his parents that their only son might not become a wanderer.

In compliance with the wishes of her laughing loving favourite had the usually stately and methodical Priscilla quickened her movements many degrees above their ordinary ratio; every hand was in requisition, and as George (who sometimes rather unceremoniously introduced fragments of Latin, with a view to keep up his antipathy to that day-mare of his boyhood) observed, the *ars coquinaria* was in practice in all its savory ramifications of roasting, toasting, frying, stewing, &c., &c. So surpassing were the promptitude and dexterity of this female, though not feminine Archimagirus, that her privileged pet, when he viewed her well arranged supper-table, vowed she would rival in celebrity even the cook of Lucullus, and deserved to figure in the galley of the Rover.

The faint suffusion on the cheek of poor Emma deepened into a glow of satisfaction as she viewed her merry brother, while Lucy half smiling, half sorrowful, looked alternately at each, and could scarcely tell, with which to sympathize.

“My dear Emma, you must not dance this

evening," said Doctor Elwin, entering the 'drawing-room,' where the family were seated in readiness to receive their guests; "you must not think of it," he added pressing her wrist with the solicitude of a parent.

"What mortal could think of dancing during the dog days, father?" cried George, who had been all day anticipating the pleasure of a hop, and consulting Lucy concerning the selection of a partner, but who, on hearing this positive interdiction, determined that no amusement should be started in which his favorite sister could not participate—"all very well for those dear little Shefros and Luricauns who foot it away fearing no loss of weight, but for us, beings palpable, phlegmatic, pinguid—by Columbus! I should start with horror from the view of my bloated visage oozing at every pore after having tripped to the music of Money Musk or Maloney's Jig—poor Morgan there, couldn't afford to lose the fiftieth part of a scruple; dancing would reduce him to 'pining atrophy,' and Priscy's pies could no nutrition yield."

"Really George," said Mrs. Elwin, "Mr. Morgan has bitten you, you grow quite poetical."

"I intend to be musical to-night," said the lively youth—"Emma has not vouchsafed me a song since my return."

Miss Mornington has complied with my request

I perceive," said Doctor Elwin, glancing at a superb harp which stood in a recess at the lower end of the room.

"Sent all her music too," added Mrs. Elwin, pettishly, "I dare say makes more fuss than harmony; she refused to sing after Emmar you know."

"I never heard her sing, but as she excels in every other accomplishment, I doubt not her musical proficiency, Ellen."

"Doctor Elwin," cried his lady, angrily, in no degree restrained by the presence of her guest, whom, as she already had asserted, she considered 'nobody,' "you really are so fond of, showing off, that girl—Emmar has no chance when she is present."

"Not if she venture to enter the lists against Miss Mornington," cried the doctor gravely, "but I acquit my child of such presumption;" he kissed his daughter's cheek and quitted the room.

Mrs. Elwin fanned herself violently, and Lucy colored with mortification.

"Is Miss Mornington indeed so fascinating?" enquired Mr. Morgan.

Emma was quick to prevent reply from her mother or sister. "Fancy cannot portray a more attractive being," said the generous girl, with a faint smile, followed by a deep sigh.

Lucy, irritated beyond forbearance by this



eulogium from one whom she considered so deeply injured by its subject, involuntarily exclaimed—  
“I think her a heartless coquette.”

“Are you aware of the full force of your expression, Miss Elwin?” said Mr. Morgan, kindling and earnest.

But poor Lucy, already conscience-stricken, sat silent and confused.

“Are you aware,” continued the young man, his pale face crimsoned, “that you brand Miss Mornington with epithets the most revolting to a delicate mind? Were I bound by the holiest ties to such a woman, I would break them, would scorn and abandon a ‘heartless coquette.’”

Miss Elwin tried to say something in mitigation, but confounded by the young man’s vehemence, she felt tongue-tied, and her embarrassment became painful.

“Pooh,” cried George, “where’s the harm Morgan in a little innocent flirtation? For my part, I think it monstrous good fun to see a clever woman playing off one fool against another, and thus rivetting her chains on both; a coquette too is fair game, a sprightly relief to the mawkishness of sickly sentiment; my inward monitor would never rebuke me for giving chace to such a craft, though I should be very shy of bringing my prize into port—”

“Prize!” said Morgan emphatically.

Mrs. Elwin's irritation, at her husband's eulogium on Katheren, had been converted into amazement at what she considered Morgan's assurance; anxious, however, to relieve the embarrassment of her daughter, and to prove the justice of her opinion, she exclaimed incautiously, "I'm sure Lucy's sentiments concerning Katheren Mornington are quite correct, for I can with truth say that she made use of every art to draw Henry Moreland from—from a young person who loved—to whom he was attached—she then jilted him, in consequence of which he went abroad—'tis a moot point if he ever return—for they say that——"

"And is Harry Moreland such a villain?" interrupted George, his blood mounting in his forehead, "such a scoundrel, as to desert a faithful girl for a jilt?—to break the heart of truth and constancy, for a woman that wears false colors? Oh where it a sister of mine he had thus deserted, I would follow him to the end of the world—I would ——"

"Miss Elwin," said Mr. Morgan, taking Emma's hand, and drawing her arm under his, "will you show me the print in that portfolio you wished me to copy?"

"Emma," cried George, "you are pale as death."

"Those flowers," said Morgan carelessly, "per-

mit me Madam?"—he touched the bell—"take those flowers from the room; their perfume overpowers Miss Elwin."

Lucy, who sat trembling, blessed the happy suggestion, which she doubted not had been induced by Morgan's penetration having discovered poor Emma's secret in her changing cheek, while Mrs. Elwin, though frightened, and anxious to avoid a discovery which her indiscretion had nearly caused, could not help wondering at the *sang froid* of her guest.—"He rebukes Lucy," thought she, "orders my flowers out of the room, without consulting me, as if I were the 'nobody,' and with all the dignity of a duke offers his arm to Emmar, not a bit apprehensive of her refusing it — free and easy — a thing scarce two-and-twenty!"

Mean-time Emma, with her watchful and assiduous friend, appeared to be busily employed with the portfolio, while George's hurried and irregular step, as he paced the apartment, gave fearful indication that all was not tranquil within.

Morgan now turned over the leaves of Katherine's books, with the music of which, though foreign, he seemed perfectly acquainted, humming at intervals different airs, and descanting on the merits of the composers.

"You sing," said Emma.

He made no reply, but ran his fingers over the

strings of the harp;—"Not perfectly in tune,—that I can soon remedy."

"The man seems to know every thing by intuition Lucy," whispered Mrs. Elwin, "I'll ask him to tune the harpsichord—he won't strain those strings too much I hope—silly thing in Doctor Elwin to incumber us with this instrument; it will be expected that we send it home I suppose."

"You have seen the Miss Morningtons, George?" said Lucy, anxious to interrupt his meditations.

"I had but a transient view of the younger," he replied, "the elder is very beautiful; apropos, I have a miniature of her, which was accidentally dropped by her sister, when—"

"Accidentally," interrupted Mrs. Elwin, "more by design than accident, I suspect."

Morgan struck a false chord, threw down the tuning key, and walked to the window.

George would have exonerated Katheren from the imputation, had he been at liberty to divulge how the portrait had fallen into his hands, but remembering his father's injunction, he was silent.

"Will you let me see the miniature?" said Lucy.

"I have lost it," he cried, after searching for some moments, "it was in my pocket-book, and that is gone."

"Gone!" repeated Mrs. Elwin, "was there money in it?"

"No mother; it contained only the miniature, Emma's last letter, and a few memoranda which I shall be sorry to lose--and now I remember having left it in the abbey choir to day; whilst you were sketching Morgan, I was amusing myself by copying some inscriptions, and must have left the book near M'Pince's monument."

Morgan resumed his employment, and the silence which ensued was only broken by sounds from the harp touched by his skilful hand.

A loud knock at the street door roused the party from a reverie into which they had been lulled by the low and melancholy chords.

"How very early," exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, "not yet seven! but certainly here comes somebody, if we may judge by the peal."

The room door was opened just sufficiently to admit Priscy's head.

"Come in Priscillar, never mind Mr. Morgan," said Mrs. Elwin, determined to prove that she, at least, thought her guest of little importance.

"Ye ha'nt been a quarrelling with nobody? Master George," said Priscy.

"Nymph of the seething cauldron, no!" said George, seizing the half pleased, half pouting virgin, and twirling her lath-like figure, which, as it cut the air in rapid circumvolution, looked like a pope's head on a mopstick.

"George! George! my carpet, the chinar,"

exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, glancing fearfully at a table on which was already arranged the gilded and transparent tea service, with its glittering appendages of urns, salvers, &c.

"Behave yourself, will you why, Master George," said the panting Priscy.

"Suffolk and Irish all in a breath, well done my Hibernianized East Anglian."

"Will you listen to a body, Master George? There's one below want you."

"Who? what?" enquired George.

"Look how do I know Sir?"

"Is he a gentleman?" demanded Mrs. Elwin.

"How do I know?" repeated Priscy; "he wear a watch and a cane, but no powder; his head is as black and as curly as the parson's."

Lucy coloured at this familiar allusion to Morgan, who, from his serious habits, was often thus distinguished by the subordinate members of the doctor's household.

"Why was not Patrick at his post Priscillar?" said Mrs. Elwin, angrily, "how came you to open the door?—Suppose it had been the Jeffersons; they would have thought my household as ill conducted as their own."

"Don't wherret yourself for nothing Ma'am," cried the offended favourite; "I was in the dining room garnishing my supper, when the tantara rap made me bounce; here's the company, says I,

and the coffee not cleared ! this comes o' hurrying things ; so I pops my head into the hall, and there I spies this younker, standing, all in a fluster like, asking for Mr. George ; sure as a toss 'tis some quarrel says I."

" You have not left the gentleman standing in the hall Priscilla ?"

" Can't you let a body finish, Miss Lucy ? No ; Patrick showed him into the dining room—Job's patience, all the plate is there ! if any should stick to his fingers !"

" How imprudent !" exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, as Priscy stalked from the apartment, clearing as much ground at a stride as Glumdalclitch ; " stop George," she continued, arresting the flying exit of her son, " I shall order the young man up. Heaven knows who we may be harbouring." She rang the bell and gave her commands.

In a minute an agile bound had cleared the stairs, and a young man entered, in whom the ladies of the party instantly recognised the stranger they had met at the Peninsula.

Morgan cast an astonished glance at him, sank deeper into the recess, and seemed intent on counting the strings of the harp.

The stranger bowed gracefully to the ladies, and addressed George, who had advanced to meet him. " My wish to relieve anxiety or prevent inconvenience will I hope excuse intrusion at a

time which is perhaps unseasonable. I found in the abbey choir this pocket-book; as its cover gave no indication of the owner, I took the liberty of opening it; a miniature fell to the ground, which has been injured, if by the fall I beg to apologize for my awkwardness; the superscription of this letter pointed out the person to whom the picture belonged, and I hastened to restore a memorial perhaps equally precious and regretted." The ruddy hue of the speaker's cheek grew deeper as he uttered the concluding words, in a voice slightly tremulous.

"Sir," said George, "I rejoice at a mistake which has procured me, some hours earlier, the pleasure of your acquaintance, but in truth that miniature is not a memorial, neither is it mine, and although from having once beheld the original, I may be inclined to covet both, yet I have not the vanity to flatter myself with even a remote probability of ever becoming the rightful possessor of either; this evening I must restore what accident alone threw into my hands."

The stranger's countenance brightened; he shook George's offered hand; there was a sympathetic frankness in the young men, which at once banished all reserve.

"Pray Sir be seated," said Mrs. Elwin; "I think my daughters and I had the pleasure of



meeting you before—it was in April or May I believe.”

“My memory Madam,” said the young man, bowing, “is more tenacious of a day marked by such exquisite enjoyment—it was on the seventh of June that I viewed the most delightful scenery, in the most delightful society.”

“Sir you are too polite,” said Mrs. Elwin, bridling; “we have invited a few friends this evening, to celebrate the arrival of my son; if you will partake of our festivity you will encrease it.”

“How difficult to refuse where inclination would accept,” replied the stranger, “how hard it is to be compelled—”

“You have no other engagement,” cried George, abruptly.

The stranger coloured.

“I am sure,” added Mrs. Elwin, “we don’t at all mind your being in boots; the weather is remarkably dry.”—She cast a searching glance on the carpet—“besides we have substituted music for dancing, in consequence of my daughter’s ill health—you are a musician; Emmar has a delightful voice—and I dare say the Miss Morningtons sing prettily enough, though my daughter’s proficiency may frighten them a little, for—”

“You will have an opportunity,” said George, impatiently interrupting his mother’s harangue,

"of becoming acquainted with the original of the miniature, the loss of which you concluded would endanger my life; you really cannot be so senseless as to reject 'the good the gods provide you.'"

The young man, after a faint struggle, yielded. George seemed in alt, he rubbed his hands, professing they should pass a glorious evening. "I really wanted something to enliven me; it saddens one to hear of an old friend's delinquency." He stole a glance at Emma, but her countenance preserved its usual sweet expression; George felt still more exhilarated; he looked around.—"Come Morgan, forbear to enact Apollo any longer; forward! and let me introduce you to——." He stopped and looked at the stranger.

"My name," said the young man, in a low and hesitating voice, "is Edward ——."

"To Mr. Edwards," cried George, promptly relieving the evident confusion of his new acquaintance, who, somewhat embarrassed, turned a vacant look on Morgan, but his eye instantly brightened with amazement, he recoiled a few paces, and repeated—"Morgan!" but rather in the tone of ejaculation than address.

The person thus apostrophized, advanced with an air of indecision, then stopped in front of the stranger, fixed on him a look of eloquent entreaty, and extended his hand; the other stood irresolute, his animated features, proud bearing, and robust

yet symmetrical form, presenting a striking contrast to the pale, interesting countenance, mild demeanour, and slight, elegant figure of Morgan; he touched, but did not take the offered hand, then threw himself on a chair, and for a moment seemed lost in thought.

The Elwins had looked on this scene in apprehension of some eventful explosion, but perceiving the stranger's effervescence or excitement had subsided innocuously, the young people breathed more freely, and began to converse on indifferent topics, hoping to dispel the extraordinary abstraction which seemed to involve their guests; but Mrs. Elwin was not so easily satisfied—"Some unlucky mystery is hidden here," thought she, "heaven send they do not prove a pair of sharpers! Morgan at least looked perfectly confounded; I'll come to the bottom of this if possible. You knew Mr. Morgan before?" said she, addressing the stranger, whom, in conjunction with George, we shall call Edwards.

A bow was the reply.

"Of course you have been in Wales?"

A second bow.

"And have visited Mr. Morgan's family?"

The young man hesitated a little, before he made, bow the third.

Mrs. Elwin, indignant at this dumb show, from a person who had hitherto proved so particularly

entertaining, was determined to elicit something at all risks. She looked around, and imagining that Morgan, who was concealed from her view, had left the room, she continued, "I am quite sorry his family are in such reduced circumstances; we do all we can to make the poor man comfortable."

A loud hem from Lucy had no effect in restraining the overwhelming velocity of her mother's pathetic declamation.—"He is a quiet, civil creature, at least as far as we may judge, but really, the most acute are sometimes deceived by false appearances; I should think it very friendly in any one to put me on my guard against a suspicious character—not that I doubt Morgan, who seems a worthy person, and I sincerely hope that a poem he is about to publish, for the relief of his family, may prove productive—at least it shall not want my patronage."

Mrs. Elwin drew herself up—George burst into a roar of laughter—Lucy and Emma exchanged glances of deep mortification at their mother's rudeness and their brother's inexplicable mirth, then looked apprehensively towards Morgan, who had thrown himself into a chair, so immersed in thought as to be entirely unconscious, not only of what was said, but of where he was, in no way betraying the slightest perception of his having been the object of Mrs. Elwin's flattering effusion.

The good lady stared at her son and then at Edwards, with the sublimity of bread wonder; it seemed as if George's mirth were sympathetic, for a half suppressed smile hovered 'round the stranger's handsome mouth; looking down demurely, as if fearful of trusting himself with an upward glance, he said, "Really Madam, your charity cannot be extended to objects of more rare distress." Again George's mirthful roar broke irrepressible; "Rare indeed!" he shouted, "Oh, that's too good."

"Upon my word George," said Mrs. Elwin, "you are too bad, these loud fits of laughter are completely subversive of decorum; in that unlucky voyage you quite lost sight of your former refinement—by and by I shall have Lucy and Emmar aping your boisterous mirth—nothing can be more at variance with good breeding."

Mrs. Elwin looked at the stranger for applause, but the young man having exchanged a rapid glance of intelligence with George, was now apparently admiring the colours of the Kidderminster.

"You are mistaken mother," said George, catching at any interruption to a subject which, although it infinitely amused him, he wished not to pursue, "you are quite mistaken—look to the cynosure of fashion, the mirth inspiring Goddess of our gay court, look to our beautiful,

witty, most attractive, (because most lively,) Dutchess ——."

"Don't speak of the castle," exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, "I hear it is quite degenerate; why they tell me the ladies there think nothing of swearing and playing at catch-i-catch—you! don't talk to me of such Dutchesses."

"Such divinities you mean mother."

"A woman without the least dignity—not at all particular—full of vanity and levity," interrupted Mrs. Elwin.

"Full of wit and vivacity," rejoined George; "as to her sprightliness, 'tis mere courtesy, put on to fall in with Irish humour.—Morgan says that when he was at the castle ——."

"Who! where!" screamed the panic struck Mrs. Elwin—"at the castle!—Morgan ——!"

The finale was lost in a loud succession of knocks, and Patrick ushered in the Jeffersons.

Morgan rose so abruptly as to make poor Mrs. Elwin start and completely lose in anger the dignified air which she had assumed to receive her guests, while the offender, passing the ladies with a low bow, that seemed rather the result of inherent good breeding than self-possession, quitted the room.

This question was addressed to a pleasing looking person who sat near the window, conversing with Emma.—“*A propos*, have you heard of your son lately?”

Emma listened with throbbing interest to a reply which was given in the affirmative; the deep glow that suffused her countenance, was observed by her companion, who kindly pressed her hand, and changed the subject.—“Here comes the Miss Mornington’s carriage,” she said, with a slight contraction of her usually open brow. In a few moments Doctor Elwin appeared, leading in his beautiful protégées. Perhaps there was scarcely one among the assembled circle—though few of them would have acknowledged it—who did not feel a secret consciousness of the decided superiority in the air and address of the females who now entered, over those who before graced the doctor’s ‘drawing-room.’ The Miss Elwins, indeed, and others of the party were perfectly well bred, but they were not possessed of that refined elegance which can only be derived from high mental cultivation, aided by intercourse with polished society. George protested in a whisper to his new friend, as the sisters advanced to salute his mother, that the vice regal Dutchess herself was not more graceful, more decidedly stamped with the impress of *haut ton*.

“What confidence!” muttered Mrs. Elwin, at

Beatrice quietly seated herself, and Katheren, after slightly curtseying to those of the party with whom she was acquainted, glided towards Emma, with a step which the observant George vowed had all the attributes of a fairy footfall. Emma, received her affectionate greeting not indeed with corresponding warmth, yet with all she could assume. Beatrice marked the chilling manner of the Miss Elwins, but Katheren saw nothing, felt nothing, save the altered face and trembling hand of poor Emma, on whom she fixed a look of such unaffected sympathy and commiseration, that even Mrs. Moreland began to waver in the faith she had lent to Lucy Elwin's representations, and made room for the chair which George promptly placed for Katheren near his sister, who, understanding her brother's eloquent look, introduced him. Katheren, recollecting the singular situation in which she was first seen by young Elwin, felt embarrassed, but finding no allusion made to her strange adventure, she gradually entered into the spirit of a conversation which was supported by him with infinite humour, and by herself with all the vivacity of her age and character. Even Emma smiled at the merry conceits of her sprightly brother, while Mrs. Moreland, with mingled regret and admiration, gazed on the beautiful and animated girl whom she had been taught to believe capricious, vain and heartless.



"How elegantly the Miss Morningtons are dressed!" said Miss Jefferson to Mrs. Elwin, the bustle attending the distribution of tea giving every one an opportunity of free criticism; "short polonese with a deep flounce, Turkish sleeves—Bob says the satin is French and the flounce real point!—Paris dresses, I'll lay my life. How well they look without trains!"

"Trains indeed, on such chits!" said Mrs. Elwin, trying to appear indifferent, "why the elder is not eighteen."

"For myself," continued the observant spinster, "I like a polonese better than the Rutland robe, but Ma' says trains give dignity.—What magnificent pearls!" again glancing at the objects of her admiration—"embroidered gloves too!—I wonder how they contrive to keep such low shoes up at the heel.—What an elegant foot has Katheren Mornington!"

"Young people should not shew their feet," said Mrs. Elwin, "Emmar's foot is very beautiful, but she hides it."

"Do look at Miss Mornington's hair," continued the persevering and provoking damsel, "I mean the younger: was there ever such a profusion? And so exquisitely arranged!—A French *femme de chambre* I suppose—Well, if I haven't thought of a riddle!—Bob, why is Miss Mornington like birdlime?—Can't you guess?"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Elwin, "what is George about?"

"Only introducing Edwards to Miss Mornington," said the flippant lady; "I should have thought that ceremony quite superfluous—Goodness how she blushes! Well she does look beautiful, but how strange not to know a man with whom her aunt is so particularly intimate! You remember the extraordinary scene at Mullins' farm, which I described to you and the doctor?"

"What do you mean?" gasped Mrs. Elwin.

"Why that's the hero of the story!"

"Nonsense! impossible—that is the young man we met at Mucruss."

"True," cried Miss Jefferson, "and so I should have said when I told you our adventure, but the doctor gave me such a look, cut me so short, that I was frightened to death and forgot every thing."

The young lady, satisfied with the visible discomposure of Mrs. Elwin left her to chew the cud of perplexity and went to condole with Lucy on the loss of her beau, who had seated himself near Beatrice—"My dear," cried she, "nobody can cope with those Morningtons! There! you may easily perceive the man is already caught; when speaking to you he seemed as sober as a poor scholar with a heavy satchel and empty stomach; now he is bright as a barrister with a brief in both pockets; my diamond pin to a Dovy's, he pops the

question this very evening—Nobody can cope with these Morningtons!"

Lucy cast an apprehensive glance at George, who was watching the animated countenance of Katheren, as, for the amusement of Emma, she described her introduction at the court of Versailles—"A case in point," said Miss Jefferson, observing the direction of Lucy's eye, "George entrapped already! Katheren Mornington is just the person to hit his fancy, win his heart, and reject his hand, for depend upon it no one here will ever get *her*; she only amuses herself with our flirts '*pour passer le temps*;' quite laughs at Bob, yet when he was at Versailles—"

Here Lucy, who presided at the tea table, turned abruptly to George, who had flown thither with Katheren's cup, and was returning with equal alacrity—"George," she whispered, catching his arm, "you are not going to trifle with Miss Mornington the whole evening? Remember our friends are assembled to welcome you; the hero of the revels should divide his attentions."

"True sister; you perceive I am giving Miss Mornington her due complement; the rest shall be speedily satisfied; I will take them *tutti quanti*." George resumed his seat, Lucy frowned, and Miss Jefferson giggled; she had been silent thirty seconds; it was very remarkable, very disagreeable, at least to the lady, so she bent her steps to-

wards Doctor Elwin; who stood apart, intently observing Beatrice and her companion; the latter animated and loquacious, the former silent and thoughtful—"You know that young man Doctor Elwin?"

The poor doctor started; he had not noticed the approach of this worse than Egyptian plague; escape was impossible; she had linked her arm with his, and held him fast.

"I never saw him before he was introduced to me by my son this evening—but won't you join the card party Miss Jefferson?"

"Oh! the tables are not yet made up, the servants are only now taking away tea—what beautiful china! but Mrs. Elwin has such opportunities of procuring knick knacks; I wish I had a brother in the navy, and connexions in England—Gracious! I hope Patrick won't let the tray fall—Isn't he a pretty fellow?"

"Who? Patrick!" exclaimed the astonished doctor.

"How can you quiz one so?" remonstrated the lady, a little provoked; "I mean that young Edwards; he seems over head and ears."

"In what?"

"In love to be sure! I wonder what the old lady will say to the inconstancy of her *inamorato*."

"Old lady!" said Doctor Elwin, whose ear was sensible of the sounds, while his mind was absorbed

by other matters—"Old lady!" he repeated, making a faint effort to comprehend her meaning; "true, your mother I dare say is looking for you."

"La, Doctor Elwin!" cried Miss, pursing up her mouth, "how can you be so droll? You know I mean Miss Mornington's aunt; surely you are aware young Edwards is the protégée of that immaculate person."

Doctor Elwin, with a sudden start, disengaged his arm. "Miss Jefferson," he said, "I have already expressed to you my dislike to such communications; another word Madam,"—perceiving she was moving towards Lucy—"if your visits here are made for the purpose of retailing scandal; they must cease—excuse my plainness; I would not be unnecessarily rude to a lady, but my daughter's minds must not be perverted."

Miss Jefferson, who really sought nothing more than the indulgence of her loquacity, and of a slight propensity to the marvellous, slunk away, abashed and frightened. Observing the doctor's eye fixed on her, she seated herself next her brother, who was lolling on the sofa, in what he thought a killing attitude.—"Bob," she whispered, "the doctor is mad!"

"Mad!" repeated the literal Bob, starting upright as he gazed on her terrified countenance, "goodness gracious! hydrophobia, bitten, eh?"

"He gave me such a jerk and such a push," continued the distressed damsel, too much engrossed by her own alarm to attend to her brother's, "it's a mercy I wasn't down!"

"Pooh!" said the loving brother, resuming his attitude of exquisite negligence; "you are always poking your nose in every one's way, always fidgeting and chattering; cousin Phil says your body is like the mill sails in a gale of wind, and your tongue like the clapper."

"Philip is very uncivil; why should not one woman's chat be as much prized as another's? I am sure I try all I can to be agreeable, yet you see there's quite a crowd collected round Katheren Mornington, and nobody minds me."

Katheren indeed, while seeking to amuse only her own immediate circle, had attracted the attention of others of the party, who, one-by one, approaching the bow window in the recess of which the social little group were seated, had gradually formed what Miss Jefferson had denominated, a crowd. Neither disconcerted nor elated by the interest which the novelty of her remarks had excited, and apparently unconscious of the augmented number of her auditors, the animated girl proceeded in her sketches of some of the principal characters of the French court, illustrating them by various anecdotes, whimsically detailed. Bob, weary of exhibiting where there were none to

admire, now joined the party, leaving poor Miss Jefferson, whose instinctive dread of the doctor's severe eye chained her to the spot, in her turn to chew the cud of mortification.

"You have not yet described the goddess of your idolatry, Marie Antoinette," said Mrs. Moreland, addressing Katheren, "is she not beautiful?"

"Beautiful indeed! Is that all you know about it?" cried Bob, elbowing his way into the circle; "when I was at Versailles why——"

"Hush!" cried George, "we have the bad taste to prefer Miss Mornington's description to yours, my good fellow."

"She is not beautiful," said Katheren.

"Not beautiful!" roared Bob, with upraised hands, "what will the world come to at last?"

Young Elwin's angry remonstrance was checked by Katheren's continuing the subject with perfect composure.—"Her attractions consist not in harmony of feature; in that she is infinitely surpassed by Mesdames de Polignac, de Lamballe, and other ladies of the court; her's is the beauty of spirit, grace, and intelligence; she is captivating; beauty is a term beneath her, it cannot describe her enchanting smile, her fascinating address, her bewitching gaiety."

"These are not the attributes of a German princess," said Mrs. Moreland.

"And yet," said Katherine, "a certain backward inclination of the head, and a decided air of majesty diffused over her entire person, prove her a daughter of the Cæsars."

"Cæsar!" shouted Bob, "her father's name was Francis—upon my honor it was!" he asserted, impressively placing his hands on his hips, and then extending his arm at a right angle with his body, assuming a look ludicrously consequential.

A scream of laughter drove the astonished critic from the circle.

"Is not the Queen of France censured for indiscretion, for contempt of established customs?" enquired Mrs. Moreland emphatically.

"I have been told that she is accused by those who admire her most," said Katherine, "that she is condemned for breach of prescriptive rules by the very persons who were most forward in ridiculing and stimulating her to subvert the absurd and wearisome etiquette of the ceremonial Bazarbon."

"What a school for childish inexperience!—what a guide for youthful enthusiasm and credulity!—A frivolous court, a giddy queen, intrigue, immorality, infidelity!"

This severe critique was addressed to George, and uttered in so low a tone, that Katherine was the only person besides who caught the words.



She turned her head hastily towards the speaker, and perceived a gentleman leaning on the back of young Elwin's chair, whose eyes were riveted on her with an expression of deep regret, at once startling and unaccountable.

"Ha!" exclaimed George, "here at last! Miss Mornington permit me to present to you my friend Mr. Morgan." Katherine had half risen when the name of Morgan struck on her ear awaking a train of disagreeable associations; she involuntarily recoiled, and reseated herself, then, vexed at her apparent rudeness, bowed and timidly raised her eyes, but their lids again fell as she encountered the same melancholy and earnest gaze.

"Come Morgan," said George, laughing, "confess that you absented yourself in order to excite interest, and prove what an indispensable personage you are.—My mother has been most particular in her enquiries; my father interdicted all amusements until your arrival. Lucy has for some time looked the type of despondency, and the door has been the object of Emma's fixed attention."

"And yourself?" said Morgan.

"Truly," said George, "that question is too searching; I must confess that till you spoke I never thought of you."

"Nor even then, for I have more than once addressed you, and, alas! for your veracity and

my vanity, I have been half an hour in this room, unnoticed, may unobserved."

"Exactly during the time Miss Mornington was speaking; surely you could not hope for attention then, my good friend."

Katherine would have returned, parried, or disclaimed the sportive compliment, would have preferred any thing to remaining silent, yet to silence she seemed doomed, for while George and Morgan continued to recriminate and retort in merry mood, an unaccountable depression, gradually deepening into despondency, baffled her efforts at cheerfulness. She dared not whisper, even to herself, that mortified vanity might be the cause of this sudden change from animation to dejection. The person whom she disliked as it were by anticipation, whom she had pretended to despise, had attempted to ridicule, and came prepared to condemn, that very person, far from regarding her opinion as important, had looked on her with pity, had even indirectly censured her sentiments, together with the object of her enthusiastic eulogy, and, gifted as she was, as she knew herself to be, seemed neither dazzled by her wit, nor won by her vivacity—"It is the just punishment of unfounded prejudice," she said internally, as she looked towards George and Morgan, the latter of whom was now conversing with Beatrice, his features wearing a very different expression from

that which they exhibited when listening to her more brilliant sister—"but of what consequence to me is his censure or commendation?" Yet as Katherine contrasted the noble countenance of Morgan, sublime in its expression of calm dignity, with the vacant faces of the crowd who fluttered, tittered, and commented, unconscious of their nothingness, she could not help feeling that the approbation of such a man was preferable to the plaudits of such a group. Buried in these reflections, she perceived not that Emma and Mrs. Moreland regarded her with amazement, while Lucy's fixed gaze spoke severity and suspicion. Those whom her vivacity had assembled, no longer amused, dispersed even more speedily than they had congregated. The oracle was dumb, and the gay group were drawn away by metal more attractive, at least more sonorous.

"You are not ill Miss Mornington?" said Emma, taking her hand.

Lucy, recalled to better feeling by this action of her sister, forgot for a moment her disgust at what she had considered Katherine's display, and, approaching the object of her jealous apprehension, enquired whether the heat were too oppressive, but being assured that Katherine was quite well, she retreated, after observing to Mrs. Moreland, in a whisper, that Miss Mornington's vivacity would return with her admirers; but Mrs. More-

land no longer gave entire credit to Miss Elwin's insinuations.

Mean-time George had reluctantly left the side of Katheren, in compliance with his friend's request to be introduced to Beatrice, who, pleased with Morgan's elegant address, and glad of any interruption to her embarrassing *tête à tête*, willingly entered into a conversation which became so interesting, that George, on whom Morgan was leaning, felt insensibly reconciled to a temporary detention from the object of his admiration. Young Edwards, however, shared not with Beatrice the satisfaction of this interruption; he became gloomy and absent; if he spoke, it was to dissent from, or to contradict; Morgan seemed the object of his acrimony, but so far was the latter from resenting his sarcastic observation and splenetic humour, that he seemed to regard his irascible opponent with particular complaisance, paying as much deference to his opinion as was compatible with dignity, and proving that although in years he could boast but a trifling superiority, yet in forbearance he might claim a vast preeminence. "Morgan," said George, when a pause in the conversation permitted the question, "what, in the name of that charity which revileth not, provoked your extraordinary philippic against the French court and its celebrated queen? I almost fancied myself again in academic durance, listen-

ing to some trembling tyro declaiming in the language of Demosthenes against the corruption and licentiousness of the Athenians."

"I have nearly forgotten the censure to which you allude."

"Oh! but I have not," exclaimed young Elwin, "for I have more than once caught myself repeating your cutting invective—'What a school for childish inexperience, what a guide for youthful enthusiasm and credulity; a frivolous court, a giddy queen, intrigue, immorality, infidelity!'"

"The expressions are indeed forcible," said Morgan, "but they were provoked by my indignation at the indiscretion, the infatuation of the person who could expose a being, brilliantly gifted like that,"—he looked at Katheren—"to such an ordeal."

Edwards started from his seat; his lip quivered, his eyes flashed, he struggled with an emotion which seemed too powerful to be restrained, but ere it had time to subdue discretion, Beatrice, turning to George, said, mildly yet firmly—"The school in which Katheren was instructed, the guide of her childhood, may be very differently distinguished; candour, piety and morality were their characteristics; our errors can never be the consequence of the 'indiscretion' or the 'infatuation' of her, who inculcating, and at the same time exemplifying, precepts at once elevated and per-

spicuous, could not anticipate their subversion during a transient probation."

As she spoke the eyes of Morgan were fixed on the youthful champion, while Edwards, after having darted at him a triumphant glance, turned aside his head, to conceal his emotion.

"And your sister," said Morgan, with some hesitation, "justified this confidence?"

Beatrice, in her eagerness to extol Katheren, overlooked the keenness and freedom of this inquisition.

"Completely," was her reply, "the admiration she excited, and the adulation she received, might have elated, but could not warp her mind; her senses might have been dazzled, but her heart was untouched; she is now what she ever was, generous, sincere, affectionate and artless!"

Morgan involuntarily caught the hand of Beatrice, and would have raised it to his lips, had he not been recalled to recollection by a glance from Edwards.—"Forgive my enthusiasm, Miss Mornington," he said; "you at least claim for your instructress the applause of having formed or fostered, noble sentiments."

"I have no merit," said Beatrice, blushing, "in proclaiming the superiority of Katheren; my praises of one who is my sister and the favorite pupil of her I most venerate, may be called selfish."

"Favorite!" repeated Morgan, "and yet you

this philosophic illumination which, she says, wearing the semblance of truth and reason, is the subtle destroyer of both. Were I to read the authors in question, I should incur her severest censure."

A second triumphant glance passed from Edwards to Morgan.—"To preserve inviolate the delicacy of the female mind might be a motive for such prohibition," he observed.

"And your sister?" said Morgan earnestly.

"Is equally unqualified to decide on this subject; but Katheren may claim all the merit of a sacrifice, for her enquiring mind would pierce into every thing, while my apathetic spirit is easily satisfied; I should require incentive to pursue such studies, but it is with a sigh that Katheren turns from the fashionable publications transmitted by her continental friends."

"Yet away from such salutary influence, and free to follow her own impulse, your sister ——"

"Would need no incitement to subdue it, save the remembrance of my aunt's interdict," interrupted Beatrice, proudly.

The fair subject of this dialogue again detected the eyes of Morgan fixed on her, and turning from his earnest gaze, she said to Emma,—  
"Doubtless I remind Mr. Morgan of some one particularly displeasing; he has more than once regarded me with no very flattering expression."

"On the contrary," replied Emma, "I heard him observe to George, that you remind him of a person infinitely dear to him."

"Thank heaven!" cried Katheren, "there is at least one amiable person whom I resemble."

This involuntary exclamation drew from Mrs. Moreland a smile, and the observation—"You infer then that the person dear to Mr. Morgan must be amiable."

"Is it possible to love a being that is unamiable?" enquired Katheren.

"It is for you or Mr. Morgan to decide that point," replied Mrs. Moreland, smiling; "at my age prudence ought certainly to prevail over passion."

"Surely at any age," said Katheren, "it is impossible to attach ourselves to the unworthy."

"Observation, if not experience, might teach you to question that impossibility," said Mrs. Moreland.

"I do not call the infatuation which deifies the vicious or the erring, love," said Katheren, earnestly.

"On what are you so eloquently descanting young enthusiast!" enquired Doctor Elwin, approaching Katheren; "but I will not hear the subject, for at present I wish you to exert other powers; my wife, I perceive, has made her most important arrangements; the sedate are all employed, except Mrs. Moreland, who prefers the



society of the frivolous to the intellectual excitement of the card table; we must reward her constancy by exerting our powers of entertainment."

"Miss Mornington will commence."

"No Emma," said the doctor—his heart smote him as he looked towards the delinquent on the sofa, who still sat the living though silent image of mortification. "I have been harsh to Miss Jefferson, and must atone." Poor volubility instinctively shrunk at his approach, dreading the repetition of his withering reprimand, but what words can express her rapture when the doctor petitioned for a song, a favor he had never requested before. She started from her seat, smoothed the folds of her dress, drew herself up, threw back her elbows, and her overflowing delight warring with her previous disorder, produced an hysterical giggle. "Bob, Bob," she exclaimed, "Doctor Elwin wishes us to sing; will you try that sweet duet? You know what I mean, don't you?"

"I like a solo best," grumbled Bob, "your second is too loud for my falsetto."

"Well then," said the doctor, leading her to the instrument, "we will have your solo first, and then your sister's."

Miss Jefferson jingled a symphony, which Bob prepared to fall in with, by hemming and giving his head a languishing inclination: he spread his

hand upon his breast, closed his eyes, pursed up his mouth, and from the contracted aperture emitted so extraordinary a sound that the hearers looked round in dismay to discover from whence it proceeded, but when the contortions continued, when the soprano yelp became more audible, when a chromatic passage was attempted, followed by a broken cadence and a shake in which the vibrations of the voice were impelled by vibrations of the head, decorum could no longer restrain, an almost universal titter was commenced, which, increasing in proportion as Bob increased in pathos, ended with the song, in a burst that was drowned by a thundering clap from the delighted George, who, flying to the panting *dilettante*, shook him heartily by the hand, citing the tears which ran adown his cheeks to prove that he never in his life was more affected. Bob simpered, bowed, made a stammering attempt to disclaim the compliment, then shuffled to his seat and tried to look indifferent, while an unconscious grin betrayed his credulous vanity. His sister, now excited to more than usual exertion by the praises of the penitent doctor, poured forth a volume of voice which certainly formed powerful contrast to her brother's squeak; the style indeed was not so amusing, for her hearers involuntarily shielded their ears from the overpowering din. Satisfied however with having made herself heard, which

society of the frivolous to the intellectual excitement of the card table; we must reward her constancy by exerting our powers of entertainment."

"Miss Mornington will commence."

"No Emma," said the doctor—his heart smote him as he looked towards the delinquent on the sofa, who still sat the living though silent image of mortification. "I have been harsh to Miss Jefferson, and must atone." Poor volubility instinctively shrunk at his approach, dreading the repetition of his withering reprimand, but what words can express her rapture when the doctor petitioned for a song, a favor he had never requested before. She started from her seat, smoothed the folds of her dress, drew herself up, threw back her elbows, and her overflowing delight warring with her previous disorder, produced an hysterical giggle. "Bob, Bob," she exclaimed, "Doctor Elwin wishes us to sing; will you try that sweet duet? You know what I mean, don't you?"

"I like a solo best," grumbled Bob, "your second is too loud for my falsetto."

"Well then," said the doctor, leading her to the instrument, "we will have your solo first, and then your sister's."

Miss Jefferson jingled a symphony, which Bob prepared to fall in with, by hemming and giving his head a languishing inclination: he spread his

hand upon his breast, closed his eyes, pursed up his mouth, and from the contracted aperture emitted so extraordinary a sound that the hearers looked round in dismay to discover from whence it proceeded, but when the contortions continued, when the soprano yelp became more audible, when a chromatic passage was attempted, followed by a broken cadence and a shake in which the vibrations of the voice were impelled by vibrations of the head, decorum could no longer restrain, an almost universal titter was commenced, which, increasing in proportion as Bob increased in pathos, ended with the song, in a burst that was drowned by a thundering clap from the delighted George, who, flying to the panting *dilettante*, shook him heartily by the hand, citing the tears which ran adown his cheeks to prove that he never in his life was more affected. Bob simpered, bowed, made a stammering attempt to disclaim the compliment, then shuffled to his seat and tried to look indifferent, while an unconscious grin betrayed his credulous vanity. His sister, now excited to more than usual exertion by the praises of the penitent doctor, poured forth a volume of voice which certainly formed powerful contrast to her brother's squeak; the style indeed was not so amusing, for her hearers involuntarily shielded their ears from the overpowering din. Satisfied however with having made herself heard, which

society of the frivolous to the intellectual excitement of the card table; we must reward her constancy by exerting our powers of entertainment."

"Miss Mornington will commence."

"No Emma," said the doctor—his heart smote him as he looked towards the delinquent on the sofa, who still sat the living though silent image of mortification. "I have been harsh to Miss Jefferson, and must atone." Poor volubility instinctively shrunk at his approach, dreading the repetition of his withering reprimand, but what words can express her rapture when the doctor petitioned for a song, a favor he had never requested before. She started from her seat, smoothed the folds of her dress, drew herself up, threw back her elbows, and her overflowing delight warring with her previous disorder, produced an hysterical giggle. "Bob, Bob," she exclaimed, "Doctor Elwin wishes us to sing; will you try that sweet duet? You know what I mean, don't you?"

"I like a solo best," grumbled Bob, "your second is too loud for my falsetto."

"Well then," said the doctor, leading her to the instrument, "we will have your solo first, and then your sister's."

Miss Jefferson jingled a symphony, which Bob prepared to fall in with, by hemming and giving his head a languishing inclination: he spread his

hand upon his breast, closed his eyes, pursed up his mouth, and from the contracted aperture emitted so extraordinary a sound that the hearers looked round in dismay to discover from whence it proceeded, but when the contortions continued, when the soprano yelp became more audible, when a chromatic passage was attempted, followed by a broken cadence and a shake in which the vibrations of the voice were impelled by vibrations of the head, decorum could no longer restrain, an almost universal titter was commenced, which, increasing in proportion as Bob increased in pathos, ended with the song, in a burst that was drowned by a thundering clap from the delighted George, who, flying to the panting *dilettante*, shook him heartily by the hand, citing the tears which ran adown his cheeks to prove that he never in his life was more affected. Bob simpered, bowed, made a stammering attempt to disclaim the compliment, then shuffled to his seat and tried to look indifferent, while an unconscious grin betrayed his credulous vanity. His sister, now excited to more than usual exertion by the praises of the penitent doctor, poured forth a volume of voice which certainly formed powerful contrast to her brother's squeak; the style indeed was not so amusing, for her hearers involuntarily shielded their ears from the overpowering din. Satisfied however with having made herself heard, which

society of the frivolous to the intellectual excitement of the card table; we must reward her constancy by exerting our powers of entertainment."

"Miss Mornington will commence."

"No Emma," said the doctor—his heart smote him as he looked towards the delinquent on the sofa, who still sat the living though silent image of mortification. "I have been harsh to Miss Jefferson, and must atone." Poor volubility instinctively shrunk at his approach, dreading the repetition of his withering reprimand, but what words can express her rapture when the doctor petitioned for a song, a favor he had never requested before. She started from her seat, smoothed the folds of her dress, drew herself up, threw back her elbows, and her overflowing delight warring with her previous disorder, produced an hysterical giggle. "Bob, Bob," she exclaimed, "Doctor Elwin wishes us to sing; will you try that sweet duet? You know what I mean, don't you?"

"I like a solo best," grumbled Bob, "your second is too loud for my falsetto."

"Well then," said the doctor, leading her to the instrument, "we will have your solo first, and then your sister's."

Miss Jefferson jingled a symphony, which Bob prepared to fall in with, by hemming and giving his head a languishing inclination: he spread his

hand upon his breast, closed his eyes, pursed up his mouth, and from the contracted aperture emitted so extraordinary a sound that the hearers looked round in dismay to discover from whence it proceeded, but when the contortions continued, when the soprano yelp became more audible, when a chromatic passage was attempted, followed by a broken cadence and a shake in which the vibrations of the voice were impelled by vibrations of the head, decorum could no longer restrain, an almost universal titter was commenced, which, increasing in proportion as Bob increased in pathos, ended with the song, in a burst that was drowned by a thundering clap from the delighted George, who, flying to the panting *dilettante*, shook him heartily by the hand, citing the tears which ran adown his cheeks to prove that he never in his life was more affected. Bob simpered, bowed, made a stammering attempt to disclaim the compliment, then shuffled to his seat and tried to look indifferent, while an unconscious grin betrayed his credulous vanity. His sister, now excited to more than usual exertion by the praises of the penitent doctor, poured forth a volume of voice which certainly formed powerful contrast to her brother's squeak; the style indeed was not so amusing, for her hearers involuntarily shielded their ears from the overpowering din. Satisfied however with having made herself heard, which



was at all times the aim of her ambition; she rose, kicked aside her train, walked from the instrument with an air, and seated herself beside Bobby.

After having gallantly assured the smirking damsel that her splitting voice might flexile make 'the knees of knotted oaks,' George hurried to Katheren. His mother, who had been marshalling her cutters in, having set all things in order within her particular department, now found leisure to methodize the other—"Miss Mornington will feel more assured George, if your sister set her the example; Emmar dear, you need not be timid, though 'tis an age since you have sung."

Katheren, who had half risen, re-seated herself, and Emma, listless and indifferent, permitted Morgan to lead her forward. Katheren looked after her somewhat indignantly—"No," she murmured, "not even the attentions of such a man as that could make me fickle!" As the whispered ejaculation passed her lips, she smiled at the implied eulogy it contained on the object of her former antipathy; but her transient displeasure was soon dispelled; poor Emma's face, now in strong relief from the position of the lights, was turned towards her: no longer the blooming, lively girl whose every eye-beam shed animation, she sat at the instrument, pale and spiritless, carelessly turning the leaves of a book which Morgan had

placed before her, when Moreland's name written beneath her own on some music which had been his gift, changed the nature of her feelings; her heart beat violently, and after a vain effort at composure, she turned with an appealing look to Morgan, but observing George standing near, his eyes fixed on the united names, she controlled the impulse which would have prompted her to rise, and instantly commenced a pathetic Irish air. Nervous and feeble, her touch was timid, her tones tremulous; she faltered, and would have stopped, but the dying note was caught and sustained by a deep melodious voice, which harmonising with hers, seemed like the inspiration of her guardian genius encouraging her to proceed, and although the merit of the performance principally belonged to the second, yet Mrs. Elwin was sufficiently satisfied with the effect it produced on the audience, to solicit her daughter for "That beautiful thing from the Italian of Cimarosa." Emma however, had already retreated, attended by her vigilant friend, nor was the expressive look of gratitude she fixed on him unobserved by Katherine.

"Miss Mornington," said Mrs. Elwin, "do not be dismayed; Emma has had the first instruction; you remember," she added, with a look condescendingly encouraging, "I told you we are always merciful to beginners."

A smile parted the lips of Beatrice, and she bent

her head to conceal it, then glanced triumphantly towards her beautiful sister, whom Doctor Elwin was leading to the harp. Katheren possessing that happy tact which preserves the medium between timidity and confidence, seated herself in the recess, and raised her eyes. Such an audience could not, to her, be formidable, yet the color on her cheek grew deeper, her pulse beat quicker, as she looked around. Wondering at her sudden panic, she drew the harp towards her and swept its strings.

"'Tis quite in tune," said Mrs. Elwin, complacently, finding that Katheren paused; "Mr. Morgan is a mighty convenient person, very civil too, for he spent an hour at it."

"All the Welsh are harpers I believe," said Bob.

At this speech George would certainly have excited his mother's ire by another mirthful explosion, had he not been too much absorbed by admiration of Katheren's unstudied and graceful attitude. After a moment's reflection she played a rapid and brilliant symphony, which, gliding into the slow and plaintive, was at length subdued to tones that harmonised with a voice "soft as a seraph's breathings;" the witching melody stealing on the ear, swelled gradually into strains so rich and thrilling, in which science was combined with taste so exquisite, and power so happily controlled,

that the song had ceased for a few moments ere the entranced auditors burst into expressions of admiration and astonishment.

"Goodness me, Miss Mornington!" exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, half pleased, half pettish, "why didn't you tell us you could sing so?"

"I said she had music in her face, didn't I Bob?" cried Miss Jefferson.

"She should have dwelt more on the staccato," whispered the connoisseurs.

"Staccato!" muttered Miss Jefferson, "don't you mistake Robert? I thought ——"

"What signifies your thought?" growled the critic.

Petitions for another song were now poured from those who pressed forward to compliment Miss Mornington. Katheren examined the eager throng, but the form she sought was not amongst them, and once more the languor of depression stole over her features. "At least she is not elated by flattery," thought Mrs. Moreland, "she is not excited by applause." Mrs. Moreland was mistaken, but Katheren's pride was stronger than her vanity, her ambition too soaring to be gratified with the plaudits of the circle in which she now moved. Again she took her harp, but no longer excited to brilliant execution by the earnest glance of that eye which she had marked when she first seated herself, her tones were more

touching than powerful, and while her hearers almost breathlessly listened to sounds now modulated even to mournful pathos, she seemed entirely unconscious that she was uttering the spell of enchantment, and when the strain died away, scarcely heeded the low murmur of delight which it elicited.

"Who has so exquisitely vocalised that beautiful mottetto?" said Morgan to Beatrice, "I think I recognise the air."

"It is the unfortunate Stradella's," she replied, "the words and vocal arrangement are Katheren's."

"Your sister," observed Morgan, "hereafter of human beings must be one of the most unaccountable."

"For what reason?" enquired Edwards.

"Because she is one of the most gifted."

Beatrice would have smiled at the solemnity of this compliment, but the gravity of Morgan disturbed her, and she looked at Katheren with instinctive apprehension, as if fearful of discovering in her preeminence a cause for her future condemnation.

"You are more than commonly interested in the fate of Miss Katheren Mornington," said Edwards, with a happier expression of countenance than he had hitherto worn.

"Can you wonder at that?" enquired the other.

There was nothing in the complimentary interrogatory which the beauty of Katheren did not justify, but Beatrice fancied the 'you' was particularly emphatic. "Katheren would wish to be released from her conspicuous situation," said she. Morgan half rose, but instantly re-seated himself, while Edwards flew to the magnet, who was still surrounded by admirers, and playfully parrying entreaties for another song.

"Your sister wishes to speak with you Miss Mornington," said Edwards, extending his hand, which Katheren, glad to escape, accepted, though still thinking the young man's look, and manner presumptuously familiar; she walked towards Beatrice, but perceiving who was her companion, passed her with a smiling nod, and again placed herself beside Emma, while Edwards, after expressing his delight at her performance, bowed, and returned to Beatrice.

"That fifer is thrusting himself forward on purpose that he may be asked to play," whispered Bob, who having been shifted like the hunted slipper from one fair spinster to another, at last reached his sister; "I'd bet a wager his flute is in his pocket—but I'll open the doctor's eyes, I'll bring down the chap's courage!"

"Hush, hush!" cried Miss Jefferson, "if you speak, we are undone."

"Why what's in the wind now why?" said Deb.

"Aye what indeed?" observed Mrs. Elwin, overhearing him; "you may well ask the question; all my card-tables broken up!—Only think of Katheren Mornington's keeping her beautiful voice in the back ground, merely that she might surprise us and create this confusion!—The moment she began, down went the cards, off whisked my party, cutters in and all, while Mrs. Dogherty, in her hurry to be foremost, forgot to pay her cards, left her unlucky train under the leg of her neighbour's chair, and upset the candlestick upon the carpet!"

"The new carpet!" exclaimed Miss Jefferson.

"And the plated candlestick!" drawled Robert.

"Had she been so kind as to give us a hint of her extraordinary talent, I should have been prepared, and have had no cards at all; Patrick will not be paid for a single pack!—She won't sing again, so supper must be ordered full three quarters of an hour before the time appointed.—How Priscillar will storm!"

A loud rap at the street door changed the channel of the poor lady's perplexity.—"Who can this be at such an hour?—do I expect any one else?—my head is so addled by that unlucky music,—let me see—was Mr. Karwin invited?"

Patrick entered and presented a note to Doctor Elwin, who glanced at its contents, changed color and hurried out of the room. Mrs. Elwin overtook him on the landing.—“You are not summoned to any distance Doctor Elwin?—You will not want Patrick or the coachman?”

“No, no,” replied the doctor, “Lady Moreland’s carriage waits for me; Sir Patrick is dead!”

“Dead! an apoplectic fit? a paralytic stroke?” screamed Mrs. Elwin, as her husband descended the staircase.

“The former.”

“Is Henry sent for?—is Lady Moreland in great distress?—did he make his will?” shouted the lady, but the doctor was already out of hearing.

“Poor Sir Patrick!” exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, throwing wide her drawing-room door, and trying to conceal by a tone of commiseration and regret the satisfaction she felt at being the first to communicate so astounding a piece of intelligence. Poor Sir Patrick Moreland has dropped down dead in an apoplectic fit!”

This was too much for the astenished wits of Robert.—“Dropped down dead, goodness gracious me!” he exclaimed, casting up his eyes till the whites alone were visible,—“dropped down dead! and all in a moment too! God help us!”



He looked around to discover the effect of this pathetic apostrophe.

Katheren, on whom the announcement operated like electricity, started from her seat, uttered an ejaculation which again drew on her the eye of her scrutinizing observer, and caught Emma's hand, while her countenance expressed the most contradictory and extraordinary emotion; but finding her companion shrink from the touch, she recovered her self-possession.

Mrs. Moreland rose abruptly, and quitted the room.

"Gone to hide her joy and write to her son," muttered Bob, "a pretty windfall for him!"

"I wonder will the heiress have him now?" whispered Miss.

"Who told you they were heiresses? I don't believe it; they have no manners."

"Oh! but they are heiresses though; Mr. Karwin told me so, and he knows all about them."

"Umph! let a lawyer alone for finding out where money lies—pity they didn't purchase politeness with some of their cash."

"Nay," cried his sister earnestly, "the Miss Morningtons were the only persons in the room who kept their countenances when you broke down so in your last quavers."

"I broke down! is it I?"

"Myself, I mean," cried the alarmed sister, "my accompaniment was intolerable, I wonder how you got on at all."

"Got on Miss! why when I was at Versailles —"

"Will you take a lady down to supper Mr. Jefferson?" said Mrs. Elwin.

"There," cried Miss, looking around in consternation, "not a man disengaged! I'm always left in the lurch; come Robert dear, let me have your arm."

"I'd rather be hanged than be plagued with my sister."

"But what can you do?" remonstrated Miss; "all the beauties are disposed of; Miss Morington with young Edwards, Miss Katherine with George Elwin, and Emma with her new admirer, Mr. Morgan.—Well I wonder he didn't fly off to the heiresses—'tis a poor match after all;—a parson's son! a pretty downfall to Lucy's pride. La! this staircase is very narrow, pray Robert give me your arm, 'twill look so droll to walk into the room by oneself, as if one was on one's last legs. There's a supper! All the doctor's own glass and plate too, nothing borrowed! Well Priscilla is a host! I give her the bush for laying out a table—all done in a day too! and her wages next to nothing, eight pounds a year and Mrs. Elwin's cast offs, which are well worn before

they are given. I wish Ma' would get an English cook—save her the hire and more. Do look Robert, if Mrs. Wiseman's wig isn't turned back foremost, while her Bardolph turned up nose seems to have burned off the black curls which should have covered her gray locks. Observe the two Miss Morningtons; what a contrast! Mild Metheglin and sparkling Champaigne. Well there! if Katheren hasn't contrived to get between two beaux, Elwin and Morgan—nothing like management—I'm not up to it."

"Nor to anything else," muttered Bob; "'pon my honour I think you're like birdlime yourself, you'll stick on my hands for ever if I don't shake you off." So saying he deposited her on the end of a bench near a deaf dowager, and leaving her in this tantalising situation, seated himself, solo, at a side table, and compensated for the want of companionship by making what he called a 'capital cram,' while the more refined of the party, indifferent even to Priscy's dainties, found in the interchange of congenial sentiments and the excitement of wit a less substantial but far more exhilarating banquet, and Katheren was compelled to acknowledge that genius, talent and fascination might be the attributes of a Morgan.

## CHAPTER IV.

The dreariest day wends its way to the west,  
As well as the sunniest, clearest;  
'Neath the evergreen sod the false friend will rest,  
As well as the fondest, sincerest.

"'Twas next to nothin', Jerry says," muttered Jude, as she arranged her lady's jewel case. She glanced at Katheren, who, pressing her forehead on her open palm, seemed immersed in thought, and heeded not her loquacious attendant—" 'twas next to nothin'," repeated the disappointed Abigail, minutely arranging the paraphernalia of the toilette table, reluctant to leave the room—"No Banahes to call him from this world, no Keeners to pass him on to t'other, no wake, no wo, no heart breakin'!—what a shame!—Well I wouldn't be a 'postate Protester; I wouldn't be a barry-knight for lucre!"

"What are you speaking of Sweeney?" said Katheren looking up.

Judith's countenance brightened; she had at

length won attention—"Of Sir Patrick's berrin', to be sure Miss; Jerry went this mornin' to see his ould master laid in his last lodgment; the servants said the layin' out was next to nothin'—fine foreign lights indeed, but no frolic, no ullagone, no fun!"

"No fun!" ejaculated Katheren.

"Well didn't I say how 'mazed you'd be Miss, when I told you—but wait a bit till you see one o' the Romans stretched; 'twould do your heart good to be laid out like one of us!"

"Indeed!" said Katheren, smiling.

"Deed an' deed it would," said Jude, impressively—"Tossin' a body into the grave thrie-na-helah, without so much as a whiff o' the duden or a swig o' poteen to soften the fairies—Well, pride dines on pomp an' supe on scorn, as poor Tade says."

"Where is Tade?" asked Katheren eagerly.

"Aye, where is he indeed?" cried Jude, sighing.

"You have not heard of him?" demanded Katheren.

"Is it I haven't heard of him?" replied the evasive Judith. The entrance of Beatrice was a signal for the attendant to retire.

The foregoing dialogue took place in Katheren's dressing-room about a week after Mrs. Elwin's rout. During this interval the sisters had seen

nothing of the doctor's family; with the exception of George, whose frankness of manner had overcome even the reserve of Mrs. Jermyth; while his light hearted gaiety sometimes caused her sad countenance to brighten into a smile.

"Katheren," said Beatrice, laughing, "had you instinctive prescience of the battery you escaped by flying hither? How cruel to condemn me, quite unsupported, to the endurance of a most minute and descriptive detail of all the goods, chattels and effects of the late Sir Patrick, with an exact inventory of his household furniture, plate and china, a list of his books, whether folio, quarto, octavo or duodecimo—the cows and chickens were about to be enumerated, when your saviour, George Elwin, saved me from such accumulated grievance, by compelling my garrulous tormentor to retreat."

"Did Miss Jefferson speak of Henry Moreland?" said Katheren, anxiously.

Beatrice looked serious. "He is shortly expected, sister; an express has been despatched for him to Paris—at least so I was informed by my gazette, whom I perceive it is unnecessary to name."

"Did young Elwin mention Mr. Morgan?" enquired Katheren.—"Is he gone?" she added impatiently.

"Not gone, but going, and thus falsifying your supposition of his attachment to Emma."

"Thank heaven!" ejaculated Katheren.

"Are you grateful for his departure or his indifference?"

"Emma has not been disappointed, no," said Katheren, heedless of her sister's question, "she has rejected him!"

"Rejected!" repeated Beatrice, in astonishment, "rejected Mr. Morgan; how improbable!"

"Why not say impossible, Beatrice? Your countenance spoke as much; you think him—" She hesitated.

"Katheren," said Beatrice, with increasing surprise, "prejudice cannot have so completely blinded you! There are individuals of the Elwin family whom I esteem; they are intelligent and well educated, but I must lose the power of perception before I can cease to distinguish the vast superiority of Mr. Morgan. Believe me, such a mind as his will not seek companionship even with your favorite Emma."

Katheren looked thoughtful.—"Really, Beatrice you have a very exalted opinion of Mr. Morgan, and yet methinks the union of a poor clergyman's son with the daughter of Doctor Elwin could affix no degradation to the former at least."

"What singular, and I almost fear unfounded caprice can have so completely warped your usual discrimination, your candour? I spoke not of de-

gradation; of degrees in the scale of rank or precedence; I spoke of minds differently constituted, of tastes, of sentiments. There is an elegance in Mr. Morgan, a refinement —”

Katheren started. — “Beatrice,” she cried, “are you unprejudiced? Are you not rather influenced by feeling? Does your admiration of Mr. Morgan extend to —”

“To nothing more than simply — admiration,” said Beatrice calmly, “for I cannot even say that I esteem a man I scarcely know; but be assured sister that Mr. Morgan’s being merely a poor clergyman’s son would not shield my heart from the fascination of his manners; my safeguard must be found in other circumstance.”

“The daughter of Sir Philip Mornington, the granddaughter of the Count de Berville,” exclaimed Katheren, haughtily —

“Would feel contented,” added Beatrice, “with a being of refined mind, domestic habits and incorruptible rectitude, even within the unpretending walls of a simple parsonage.”

“Mr. Morgan,” said Katheren, musing, “is — alas I forfeit, indeed, my claim to discernment — just such a man.”

“And is it possible that your aversion to him only proceeds from the mediocrity of his place in society?”

“Aversion!” repeated Katheren, laughing,



“ what a forcible term ! No Beatrice, Mr. Morgan’s sin against me being involuntary could not provoke my antipathy. In good truth I have been unjust and petulant, for my prejudice proceeded simply from his having usurped the place of Henry Moreland.”

“ Not in your estimation at least,” said Beatrice, gravely.

“ Nay,” remarked Katheren, hastily, “ I should never have thought of classing them together ; there may be many Morelands, there can be but one Morgan.—Unless indeed,” she said, gaily, “ that strange youth Edwards—for whom, *en passant*, I have no particular predilection—may claim fellowship with him. Both have certainly caught that *air distingué*, that graceful *disinvoltura*, which Madame de Courzel has so often protested is the peculiar mark of aristocracy, and yet I predict we should vainly look for their titles in the peerage.—What think you sister ?” But Beatrice had walked to the window, and was busily employed in arranging the flowers with which Judith had decorated the snowy sill.

“ Do you think Sweeney will suit you, Katheren ?” she enquired.

“ To a miracle !” cried the lively girl ; “ I would not sell her for a ‘ world of one entire and perfect chrysolite ;’ her improvement far exceeds my anticipation ; steady, submissive, grateful—

and so delighted at being addressed by her cognomen, that the strut of importance which, in consequence, she has assumed, mars all philosophy. But *revenons à nos moutons*—first to Mr. Morgan;—suppose Emma should really prefer him?"

"Then am I mistaken as to his indifference," replied Beatrice; "her preference could not precede his, for Emma Elwin has both pride and delicacy."

Katheren's smiles vanished, and she pettishly observed; "That young man has completely insinuated himself into the good graces of the Elwin family; poor Moreland is never spoken of."

"Not so, for Mrs. Elwin announced with one of her most verbose flourishes, that in compliment to the memory of the uncle of Sir Henry Moreland, she should decline all invitations and live secluded, until the obsequies of Sir Patrick should take place."

"I may then see my good friend Doctor Elwin to-day!" exclaimed Katheren, brightening, "for Sweeney has just been speaking of the funeral, which was not, it seems, at all conformable to her fancy, or rather to her fashion—why, I could not clearly comprehend, my ideas, though considerably improved by colloquial intercourse with this imaginative people, cannot as yet soar to the sublimity of Judith's metaphors."

"Katheren," said Mrs. Jermyn, hastily enter-

ing, "Doctor Elwin's carriage approaches; will you meet him?"

Katheren bounded from the room.

"My dear aunt," said the observant Beatrice, "you have been weeping; what has happened?"

"My child," said Mrs. Jermyn, "I fear I must soon return to Switzerland!"

"Fear!" repeated Beatrice; "fear to return to Switzerland, to dear La Motte!"

"Did you never surmise Beatrice—did I never suggest the possibility of my returning to solitude, alone?"

Beatrice burst into tears.

"I was prepared for this sorrow my child; I do not expect magnanimity, but surely I may reckon on fortitude—on the fortitude of Beatrice. You have this day attained your eighteenth year, the period assigned by your father for your majority; you are at liberty to elect your own guardian."

"My election is already made," said Beatrice, eagerly clasping her aunt's hand.

Mrs. Jermyn sighed deeply.—"Think you Beatrice, that I would have spoken on this subject, had I not felt the necessity of our separation?"

"But we have no other friend, no other relative," faltered Beatrice.

"Other relatives you have," resumed Mrs. Jermyn, "but unfortunately some are unwilling,

others unfit to protect you. My sole hope is in the support, the assistance of one benevolent man—Doctor Elwin! To him, Beatrice, even this day, I mean to present a narrative of my past life, and he shall determine on the future destiny of you and Katheran. My story is most singular; if misfortunes infer misconduct, I have been, indeed, culpable; promise me, my child, that you will not aggravate my misery by refusing to elect Doctor Elwin as your future protector, should he indeed accede to my request; a request which I have been for months summoning resolution to make; and still I shrink from the pang of the parting moment! Oh, how shall I give up my children!"

The firmness which Mrs. Jermy had so strenuously advocated, she no longer exemplified; she wrung her hands, and seemed completely deprived of self-possession. Beatrice, on the contrary, nerved by some secret resolve, soothed her aunt into composure, without shedding a single tear. "You have said Mamma, that your sole dependence is on Doctor Elwin."

"Inasmuch as relates to you and Katheran," replied Mrs. Jermy.

"And by his decision you will abide?" continued Beatrice.

"Undoubtedly, my child."

The countenance of Beatrice again wore its expression of heavenly placidity.

Katheren's voice was now heard merrily trilling

“ Summer is a cumin in,  
Lhude sing cucu,  
Groweth seed,  
And bloweth meed,  
And springeth the wood nu.”

Mrs. Jermyn placed her finger significantly on her lip as the animated girl entered—“ Doctor Elwin would beguile us both Beatrice, win us from our home and our dear *Zia* ; I have promised that, with Mamma's permission, we will become truants till to-morrow, but for longer—”

“ Did your friend wish you to remain, longer ?” interrupted Mrs. Jermyn.

“ Oh yes, for an indefinite time, during the season of gaiety ; I enquired whether he had forgotten you, and he answered, jestingly I suppose, falsely I know, that you could now dispense with our society.”—Mrs. Jermyn started.—“ But he wishes to speak with you Mamma—pray let the saucy man know we are not so lightly estimated.”

“ Prepare for a visit of a few days at least, my children,” said Mrs. Jermyn.

Katheren looked astonished.

“ I have my reasons Katheren—you will ac-

quiesce as patiently as your sister." These words arrested remonstrance.

"Madam," said Doctor Elwin, rising to receive Mrs. Jermyn as she entered the parlour. Her tearful, imploring glance struck home; it went to his heart; he hemmed, tried to repeat his ceremonious address, but the obstinate word would not be uttered; it seemed to choke the good doctor, who at length reseated himself, too much agitated to observe etiquette, while his companion stood before him in mute suspense. "Good heavens!" muttered he, "can vice thus borrow the semblance of purity?—'Tis to no purpose," he cried, starting from his chair, "I cannot repeat what I had thought so well arranged, I have no nerve for circumlocution. You look disquieted Mrs. Jermyn, and I never stood so long on tenter-hooks before; brevity will be a relief to both; will you excuse and reply to, a few abrupt interrogatories?"

Mrs. Jermyn bowed.

"Are you the mother of Beatrice and Katheren Mornington?"

A look of surprise was sufficient answer.

"You are not then Katheren Sorenzo?"

Surprise now became astonishment; Mrs. Jermyn spoke not, but her countenance gave a steady denial.

"Is Katheren," cried the doctor, struggling with

his emotion, "is that sweet Katherine the daughter of Beatrice Sorenzo?"

"Thank heaven, no!" said Mrs. Jermy, fervently.

"Amen!" solemnly ejaculated her companion.

"And you are—" he hesitated.

"The sister of Sir Philip Morfington, the aunt of my wards."

"And a widow?" fearfully uttered Doctor Edwin.

The paleness of death overspread the countenance of Mrs. Jermy as she faltered a faint and indistinct monosyllable, whether negative or affirmative the doctor could not determine.

"Forgive Madam, my seemingly unreasonable curiosity; it is the deepest interest which prompts this investigation; from your own lips alone will I judge you; you have banished my worst apprehensions, I can now be calm and coherent. During my daughter's late illness I received an anonymous letter; it was in French and contained the darkest allusions to events of your former life, mysterious hints which struck at your character, with insinuations of your bearing closer affinity to your words than your own declarations warranted, or they acknowledged. As I hate such cowardly accusations I would have thrust this scrawl, which, then, I entirely disbelieved, into the fire, but that I wished to unmask and confound a person who

seized influenced by deep malignity, to blast your fame. Suspicion pointed to Kathreen's attendant, Pauline, and I only awaited my child's convalescence to denounce her. During this interval a habiting acquaintance of my wife told, what I at first considered, a ridiculous tale, springing from trifles and embellished by her inventive imagination, of your clandestine visits to a stranger who had for some time lived incognito at a farm near this cottage.

I discredited the calumny, and terrified its tattling propagator into silence, but I must confess Mrs. Bennet that my conviction of your rectitude was shaken by the corroboration of this report from a person of my acquaintance who is not at all given to romancing, and whose testimony against you seems alarming—I will not say decisive. It is needless to repeat the particulars of a tale which, if true, you will readily conjecture, if false, would unnecessarily shock you. I determined to acquaint you with reports equally injurious to your wards as to myself, and to preface my information by the exposure of your domestic, but, on enquiring for Pauline, I found she was gone, and with unpardonable weakness I postponed a communication which I feared might be fraught with bitterness, and followed by disunion. Kathreen's accident, your consequent illness, and the death of Sir Patrick Moreland compelled me still longer to procrastinate an explanation which, in justice to you, to



your wards, to myself, to my family, I can no longer delay requesting."

He ceased, but Mrs. Jermyn remained in silent perplexity—she scarcely understood of what she was accused.

"I would ask you," resumed the doctor, "to acknowledge the tie which connects you to this person; only say," added he impetuously, "only say, Mrs. Jermyn, that you are married—"

"Married!" she faltered, clasping her hands.

"I will not believe you guilty," stammered the doctor, "you are not so degraded—What! you seek stolen interviews with a lover!"

"Sir," said Mrs. Jermyn, recoiling and indignant, "he is my son!"

"Your son!" shouted the doctor, almost springing from the floor; I can now breathe freely; what a relief!—what a triumph! How I shall crow over Karwin! My dear, dear Mrs. Jermyn, I'm so much obliged to you—By what a farrago have I been deluded!—dolt! to listen to such far fetches—Her son!"—The doctor cut another caper, wiped his eyes, and then very humbly begged the lady's pardon.

Mrs. Jermyn however seemed by no means to share in this exuberant joy; her countenance wore even a deeper shade of melancholy, but her companion, lost in the whirl of his own turbulent emotion, perceived nothing, thought of nothing but

his fancied triumph; and the confusion of his paragon's calumniators.

"My dear Mrs. Jermyn," he exclaimed at length, abruptly fronting her, "why this seclusion, this secrecy? Why, by mystery, foster suspicion and corroborate scandal? But that I know you so well, I should attribute your reserve to pride; our society indeed is not such as the sister, the nephew of Sir Philip Morington may have been accustomed to move in, still—"

"Doctor Elwin," said Mrs. Jermyn hastily, her countenance crimsoned by some secret emotion, "pain me not by investing us with such chimerical superiority. With the cause of my seclusion you will soon be made acquainted, if indeed you will honor me by perusing the sad but faithful story of my life."

"There is nothing," faltered the doctor, "nothing,—for God's sake say there is nothing in it to disappoint me."

"Sir," said Mrs. Jermyn, "I would rather disappoint than deceive—I have said that my narrative is faithful; yourself shall judge the rest; it involves the sequel of a melancholy story, with the early incidents of which, from your intimacy with the Dunane family, I had reason to believe you well acquainted. I allude to the history of the Countess Sorenzo. The singular calumny you have so feelingly imparted compels a trifling

addition to my manuscript; have you patience to await it to-day, or will you receive it to-morrow?"

"In mercy let me have it to-day," replied the doctor; "better to know twenty evils than to imagine one that may outstrip all realities."

Mrs. Jermyr quitted the room, and Doctor Elwin flung himself into a chair, exclaiming, "If that woman be guilty there is no speculation in my eye or intellect." He had remained for some time buried in reflection; when a slight noise drew his attention to the door. Judy had thrust forward her shining morning face, and finding the coast clear, she gradually protruded the remainder of her person, and then advanced, step by step, towards the doctor.

"And who are you, my chubby lass?" exclaimed the latter, discrediting the sitting supposition that the slattern Judy had been metamorphosed into the neat little Irish girl who stood before him.

"Judy I was, Sweeney I'm now," she replied imitating most ludicrously the tone and air of her mistress. Then instantly resuming her natural accent and manner, and sinking her voice to a whisper, she continued,—"I was watchin' for an opportunity to spake to your honor on a little matter o' no importance to myself at all, at all, your honor."

The doctor, lost in admiration, could only stare and wonder at the novel apparition.

Judith fumbled in her pocket, and at length drew thence a paper, folded to something like the semblance of a letter, fastened with bees'-wax, and for greater security encircled with packthread. "Poor Tade, your honor, bid me slip ye this bit of a note, quite unknownst; I sealed it myself, for fear I would miscarry wid it."

Doctor Elwin was at once aroused from contemplation. "Tade! where is he? what of him?" he exclaimed.

"'Tis where he is, is hidin' up in a hole in the Gap-yonder," replied Jude.

"Hiding!" repeated Doctor Elwin, "why hiding? what has he done?"

"Is it what has he done—'tis nothin' sure enough," said Jude sadly, "but Tade your honor is no puphead lickspit, never runs like a rat from a falling house,—he sticks to a hungry friend Doctor Elwin, he stands by the poor ownah—God restore her!"

"I must speak to you another time on this subject, Jude."

"Sweeney itself, please your honor."

"Well then, Sweeney, you must describe this hiding place; to-morrow I will—"

"Maybe you'd make no bones of hearing all about it to-day," interrupted Jude, "'cause if you

do, the thing will come round quite elane; 'tis only for your honor to give commission for me to go wid my mistress."

"Are you Miss Mornington's attendant?" asked the doctor.

"That's the very thing what I am," said Judith with dignity,

"Away then, and prepare to accompany your mistress."

Off scampered Judith to pack up, forgetting in her speed her mannerly bob, and puffing till the buttons of her vest were almost burst by the force of her quickened respiration.

Mean-while the doctor, with some difficulty, unfolded the letter, and read what follows:—

"This comes from poor Tade, Doctor Elwin your honor—poor in heart, God help us! 'Tisn't for lucre I crave, only for comfort, an' very little o' that same will sarve my turn now Doctor Elwin. When I dug the grave for poor dear Donny your Honor Sir, many's the time I wished 'twas for myself I was diggin' it. I hadn't the heart to cover it up, nor the sighth either by the same token, for the tears quite blinded me. To think of my poor Don, an' my poor Gran, an' the ullabaloo that, may be, is set up after that misfortunate victim!—reckless youth makes rueful age your Honor, but words wound more than swords sometimes, so I never spake angry or bitin' to the

sufferin' cratur—only Don, Don, brakes my heart entirely your Honor! Still I swallows my grief stoutly an' says nothin'. Oh then, what a brute he must be that would hate a poor dumb baste of a dog, Doctor Elwin! I mane no disparagement to ~~lean~~ your Honor; 'twas in her bewilderment she gave him the death blow—my poor murdered prince!—sure didn't I thrash him myself wunst, for a blackguard as I was, an' when I think of it now, 'tis as 'twere the strokes were tumblin' on my own shoulders. Divil mend me, I deserve um all. But this isn't what I was spakin' of your Honor—'twas that you'd come an' drop a word o' comfort to the poor misguided Gran.—You brought back her senses afore, your Honor, an' will again, please God,—and then I'll pluck up courage too, may be, to cover the grave, an' shut out the last glimpse of—— I can't say it for the tears, Sir.—We may stop cryin' for them we love, but we'll never stop cryin' for them as loves us.

“Till death, your Honor—THADEUS SWEENEY.”

The doctor wiped a tear from his eye, crumpled the letter, and put it into his pocket, as Mrs. Jermy entered and presented him with a manuscript. She was silent, and casting on him an eloquent look of agonizing supplication, glided from the room before he could summon resolution to address her. In a few moments after, Katherine

sprang into the carriage, which awaited them; Beatrice accepting the assistance of their benevolent friend, pensive followed, and the melancholy mistress of the mansion, stealing one glance at her children, hurried from the casement, and in the solitude of her chamber gave herself to prayer and meditation.

Doctor Elwin after seeing his protégés quietly established with Lucy and Emma, locked himself into his study, and with almost womanly excitement perused the following letter and narrative:

“To Doctor ELWIN.—I have marked your gradual change from sympathy to severity, and I impute it to the machinations of my persecutor. But the blow which was meant to stun, has converted torpor into energy. For myself I would endure in silence an age of suffering, but for my child, my unfortunate child, I will resist!—Oh! Doctor Elwin, think of the pang that rends the heart of a mother who begs that her child may not be branded with her own disgrace! feel for the agony of a parent who sees a son that should have been the proud support of an ancient family stigmatised as ——. I cannot write the word, I cannot speak it, I cannot even glance at it without feeling the tameness of submission change into the energy of resistance, the throbbing wish for redress.—Yes Sir, the misfortune of his birth was the consequence of error—

not of grief,—I will proclaim it—Who dares to check a mother pleading in her son's behalf—a son like mine? Where is now the weakly-yielding spirit that quailed in timorous resignation? Oh, we knew not what we are till we are mothers, we know not our own strength till called on to defend our offspring!

But I will combat with my feelings, nor, if possible, suffer them to conquer me.—Yet how speak dispassionately of the author of all this calamity, of the being who has withered the joys of existence, who has embittered the remembrances of the past, and would extinguish the hope of the future?—In what terms shall I describe her?—how think of my wrongs and be just?—'Tis the oppressed pleading against the oppressor—can she be impartial?



## CHAPTER V.

Looking through the dark postern of years long elapsed.  
YOUNG.

The retrospective eye turns inwardly  
And views those chequer'd scenes of babyhood  
When mirth would tread on melancholy, and  
They would seem companions.

“MY maternal grandfather the Count de Ber-ville, a man of brilliant endowments and splendid prospects, was early in life taught to expect from court favour and patronage the highest honors. His father, the protégé and relative of Cardinal Mazarin, shared in the popularity but not in the reverses of that minister, and when, many years after the death of the Cardinal, my grandfather was born, it was thought that the anticipations of his parents for this their only child could not be too exalted. Introduced at court, and to its once gay and brilliant, but then morose and bigotted monarch, at an age when ambition in its spring sees nothing too great for its attainment, my grandfather, careless in his faucied security, des-

wooded country beautifully broken into hill and dale, the horizon on one side bounded by the Alps of Berno, on another by the Jura and the hills of Burgundy, (and to the south by St. Bernard and Mont Blanc, between which and Lausanne lies the blue transparent lake. : Such were the scenes of my childhood, of my sweetest yet most melancholy associations. My mother, always planning what she thought could amuse her friend, proposed visiting Italy; her husband could deny her nothing, and the mere mention of such a delightful novelty was sufficient to enrapture the lively and romantic Irish girl. That fatal excursion was the cause of wide spreading, desolating misery, of blighted prospects, of broken hearts, of guilt, shame and dishonour!

At Milan, where the travellers stopped for a short time, Lady Katheren became acquainted with the Count Soreano, the most brilliant and captivating of those who strove to win the heart and hand of this high-born and fascinating Hibernian. : My father, sincere, simple, and undesigning, imagined all mankind guileless as himself, and dazzled by the accomplishments and address of Soreano, heeded not the hints of my mother's clearer judgment, shied her wary doubts as unworthy suspicion, and refusing to hear her prudent remonstrances, promised the support which the Count solicited, advocated his cause with the

the enthusiasm which attached her to the daughter of the Earl of Dunane. How often have I embodied the idea which my mother gave of this enchanting being in her granddaughter Katherine Mornington! How often have I shrunk from the unaccountable foreboding that their destinies, like their dispositions, will be similar!

“When Lady Mary left her sister to return home, my mother, although her education was also completed, requested permission to remain with her friend, and disturbances in Ireland, with domestic occurrences, preventing the recall of Lady Katherine at the appointed time, her friends complied with her entreaties that she might be permitted to accompany my mother to Lausanne. Delighted with the sublime and picturesque beauties of a country which revived the memory of her native lakes and mountains, Lady Katherine was easily persuaded to remain at Chateau la Motte, (my grandfather's seat,) to witness the union of her friend with the son of Sir Philip Mornington, and to share in her sorrow at quitting the home of her childhood. Frequent excursions from Geneva to Lausanne along the shores of the lovely lake beguiled this grief but could not banish it, and Mr. Mornington, in compliance with the wishes of his wife, at length agreed to reside every second year at La Motte. This Chateau ‘beset high in tufted trees,’ commands a varied prospect of

wooded country beautifully broken into hill and dale, the horizon on one side bounded by the Alps of Bernese, on another by the Jura and the hills of Burgundy, (and to the south by St. Bernard and Mont Blanc), between which and Lausanne lies the blue transparent lake. Such were the scenes of my childhood, of my sweetest yet most melancholy associations. My mother, always planning what she thought could amuse her friend, proposed visiting Italy; her husband could deny her nothing, and the mere mention of such a delightful novelty was sufficient to enrapture the lively and romantic Irish girl. That fatal excursion was the cause of wide spreading, desolating misery, of blighted prospects, of broken hearts, of guilt, shame and dishonour!

At Milan, where the travellers stopped for a short time, Lady Katherine became acquainted with the Count Sorenso, the most brilliant and captivating of those who strove to win the heart and hand of this high-born and fascinating Hibernian. My father, sincere, simple, and undesigning, imagined all mankind guileless as himself, and dazzled by the accomplishments and address of Sorenso, heeded not the hints of my mother's clearer judgment, shied her wary doubts as unworthy suspicion, and refusing to hear her prudent remonstrances, promised the support which the Count solicited, advocated his cause with the

already infatuated Katheren, and drew from her a confession which he instantly imparted to the insidious Italian; but ere an explanation had taken place between the lovers, my mother, prompt, ardent and decided, had penetrated the veil with which the Count sought to conceal the weakness of his pretensions, the iniquity of his habits, and exaggerating an account she had received of the illness of Sir Philip Mornington, gave immediate orders for returning to Geneva. Ere Count Sorrenzo could even anticipate such a proceeding, they were already many leagues from Milan.

“Lady Katheren, too generous and high spirited to murmur, never permitted an expression of regret to escape her, and my mother, deceived by her apparent calmness, thought it unnecessary to wound the ears of her friend by revealing the true character of the man she had preferred. But the composure of Lady Katheren was only the consequence of her security in the faith of her lover, and although a month passed away without intelligence of the Count she still relied on his constancy, nor even when summoned to return to Ireland, and committed to the care of her sister, Lady Mary St. Elmour, did hope forsake her — ‘I shall come again Miriam,’ she said, embracing her weeping friend, ‘I feel I shall; it is impossible that I can have bidden an eternal farewell to La Motte and its venerated inhabitant,

to Clairville and my dear friends the Morningtons; something tells me I shall see you all again soon, very soon,' she added, smiling through her tears, as she listened to the fond suggestions of her heart, which whispered her lover's truth and fervor. Her prediction was fatally accomplished.

"The birth of a son could scarcely alleviate my mother's sorrow for the loss of her friend, and yet not an individual of her domestic circle wondered at, or chided, her grief. Lady Katheren was the darling of both families, and her departure spread a temporary gloom over La Motte and Clairville. The latter was the name given to a small estate which Sir Philip Mornington had purchased in the vicinity of Geneva: here, excited by the example and guided by the advice of the Count de Berville, Sir Philip renounced those pursuits which had impaired his health and injured his fortune, and now, determined that his grandchildren at least should inherit, unincumbered, the property of their ancestors, he lived with the strictest economy, yet with more perfect enjoyment than he had hitherto known, on the small income which he permitted himself to receive out of his once princely fortune; and although his creditors would willingly have trebled a sum which in truth argued but a trifling expenditure, yet, incited by the approbation of his monitor, Sir Philip was steady in rejecting all offers, how-

ever friendly, which might operate against his firmness. He was still further stimulated to persevere in his present plan by the melancholy death of a dear friend, who had been his companion in college, and also his companion in imprudence. Unhappily, Sir Charles Egerton met not such a counsellor as the Count de Berville, and, finding his affairs inextricably entangled, he flew to the infidel coward's last resource and terminated his existence, leaving his child, a boy four years old, to the protection of perhaps the only one of his gay associates who would have granted such protection—Sir Philip Mornington.

“The letter which announced this melancholy intelligence to my grandfather, was accompanied by another from his agent: some legal question arising between this person and a distant branch of our family, in which a very considerable part of the Mornington property was involved, required the immediate attendance of Sir Philip or his son in England. The Count de Berville urged the necessity of despatch in this affair, and my father was judged the fittest person to undertake the journey.—‘You will take Miriam with you,’ said Sir Philip, ‘she will like to see a country in which it is probable her children will one day reside, and perhaps play a conspicuous part; the Morningtons were long in parliament and were distinguished as much for eloquence as for pa-

triotism.' The Count smiled at the latent vanity betrayed in this speech, but made no opposition to the departure of his daughter, considering perhaps that my mother's active mind would counterbalance that inertness which was my father's greatest failing.

"Leaving her infant son to the care of Lady Mornington, my mother accompanied her husband to his native country, and when she arrived at Mornington Hall, in Devonshire, one of her first cares was to write to Lady Katheren, whose long silence had filled her with perplexity and terror. The answer to that letter increased apprehension to such alarming excitement, that it could only be soothed by my father's promising to take her to Ireland when his business in England should permit.—'My physicians, I believe, think me dying, Miriam,' wrote Lady Katheren; 'I am indeed very ill; else would your letters have remained unanswered? Alas! where is the hope which cheered me when I left you?—fled!—And what now fills its place?—You would wonder at the word which came to my pen Miriam, you would still more wonder at the feeling which dictated it; could I fly from that feeling I should be well, but this is impossible; it whispers unceasingly, 'Katheren you shall not escape.' You will weep Miriam and my beloved Swiss friends will mourn for me.—Dear La Motte!—Dear Geneva!



—I write with pain; nothing but the knowledge of your being so near could have animated me to this exertion.—Might I but see you once more!

—KATHEREN.'

"Unexpected delays encreased my mother's perturbation, and although it was winter's dreariest month, and the waves at times broke furiously over the rocks which she descried from her window, yet would she have braved these terrors to visit her friend, whose fate entirely engrossed her.

"At length the suit was compromised by a singular agreement, in which it was stipulated, that if at my brother Philip's decease there should be no male descendant of my grandfather, the family mansion of Mornington Hall should go to his opponent, who, on this concession, abandoned all further claims.

"This arrangement left my mother at liberty to seek her friend, but the voyage to Ireland was rendered unnecessary by the arrival of Lady Katheren in Devonshire, attended by her sister's husband, Colonel St. Elmour, the Countess of Dunane having been prevailed on to commit her daughter, without delay, to my mother's care. My parents immediately returned to Geneva, accompanied by Lady Katheren, and the orphan Charles Egerton, who found a kind protector in Sir Philip, a Mentor in the Count, and friends in all.

“For some weeks my mother’s eye watched with trembling solicitude the faded countenance of her friend; at length hope dawned, the flutter of apprehension subsided into confidence, and even the servants shared in the joy of both families when Lady Katheren was pronounced convalescent. Still the disease, though checked, was not subdued, and change of scene being recommended to Sir Philip, who had been long in a declining state, it was decided that Lady Katheren should accompany him and Lady Mornington into Italy.

“How little did my mother anticipate when she joyfully augured from this journey the complete restoration of her friend, the misery of their next meeting! Lady Katheren’s cheek crimsoned at the mention of Italy, but my unsuspecting parent saw in this only the remembrance, not the remains of former partiality. She had always ascribed her friend’s decline to the bleak air of Ireland; not the slightest hint had awakened suspicion of her continued attachment to Count Sorenzo, whose name, since they left him, had never been mentioned, and when a route for the travellers was traced by my mother to Mantua, it was by accident alone she omitted Milan. Judge of her astonishment and horror when she heard of the flight of her friend with a man whom she had justly classed with the vilest of his species!

The detail of Lady Mornington encreased her agony; at Mantua they had met the Count; Sir Philip and his wife, dazzled as their son had been by the showy exterior and splendid retinue of Sorenso, sought not to discover the sources of his opulence, encouraged his addresses, and depicting to each other the delight of their daughter-in-law, when they should present her friend as Countess of Sorenso, carefully avoided any communication which might take from so joyful a surprise. It was expedient however to lay before the Earl of Dunane the wishes and pretensions of the Count: Sir Philip undertook this task, while Katheren wrote to her mother. The answers to these letters overwhelmed Lady Katheren with despair, and her protectors with perplexity; the former was commanded to prepare instantly for accompanying Colonel St. Elmour to Ireland, the latter were conjured in the most earnest terms to break with the Count. 'I would rather see my daughter dead, Lady Mornington,' wrote the old Countess, 'I would rather bewail than curse her.' The visits of Sorenso interdicted, and orders given for departure as soon as Colonel St. Elmour should arrive, drove Lady Katheren to extremity; she wept, she knelt—one interview, only one! Sir Philip's mistaken zeal was now exerted to remedy his imprudence, while poor Lady Mornington, frightened by the inexorable spirit which breathed

through the Countess's letter, could only repeat the dreadful denunciation that awaited Lady Katheren's disobedience when the distracted girl clung to her for pity. Lenity might have saved her, but this harshness, though meant kindly, operated fatally, for the dawn of the next day saw Lady Katheren Conwaye, Countess Sorenzo, while her affrighted guardians, dreading to encounter the resentment and grief of her relative, left a letter for Colonel St. Elmoor, who was hourly expected, and returned home, there to meet the silent but poignant anguish of my mother.

"A few months after this event the Countess Sorenzo was a wanderer and a beggar: her last stay was the companion of her youth, whose arms were opened to receive the outcast.—'Miriam,' said the Countess, when the burst of agony caused by their melancholy meeting had subsided into the calmness of settled despair, 'do not ask me to recount the horrors I have escaped from; the detail would madden me; he, for whom in my blind infatuation I forsook all, like sin divested of its meretricious attributes, now stands revealed, monstrous in his mental deformity. For the sake of one who may live to bear a name, the fatal gift of its mother's mad imprudence, I will be silent—and mine! *my mother!* her bitter curse is in my brain, withering every hope of heaven—disinherited, disowned, execrated!—I wear it here

Miriam, next my heart—the penance of my disobedience, my brother’s killing letter, his deadly denunciation. Mary would have flown to her poor sister, but could I involve her in my fate, destroy her children, make them exiles, and for one who soon will find a certain shelter?—My monument of turf will sit more lightly than my guilt!—You will protect my offspring Miriam—nay promise not; that look is all sufficient: my babe will have no other parent.’

“In a few months the Countess Sorenzo expired in the arms of her friend, after having given birth to twins, Beatrice and Katheren Sorenzo.

“Many years after this melancholy event, my grandfather, the Count de Berville, visited Florence. In one of the squares of that city he saw a vast multitude collected to witness the execution of a nobleman, convicted of crimes monstrous and revolting; curiosity prompted the Count to mingle with the crowd; a person shortly appeared, guarded on either side, whose calm majestic bearing, slow tranquil step, and look of resigned fortitude, awakened the involuntary sympathy of the spectators. He knelt, uncovered, undismayed, his arms folded, his eyes fixed, fronting that public, that disgraceful death which might unnerve the hero. ‘Is this,’ said my grandfather, ‘the triumph of integrity or of dissimulation?’ The fatal word was given by the culprit himself, in a tone

deep and unflinching; the gaze of the spectators was bent on the speaker with breathless intensity; no quivering of the lip, no blanching of the cheek, no working of the muscles betrayed a consciousness that his doom was deserved, or a dread of one more terrible hereafter. In an instant he was dead.—It was Sorenzo!

“ Thus Doctor Elwin have I briefly related the story of Lady Katheren Conwaye; had I dwelt on her sad tale to you, as my mother did to me, I should have won for her all your commiseration—Alas! I am compelled to be selfish, and bespeak some portion of it in behalf of errors and misfortunes even greater than her’s.

“ The reminiscences of my early years are all delightful; above, around me, cloudless skies, hills sunny and smiling as then appeared my destiny. A gay parterre appeared to spring beneath my little feet, the birds, scarce more volatile or joyous than myself, seemed to warble my welcome, a bright transparent lake reflected my puny form, while, in the distance, oft measured by my wandering eye, the pyramidal Alps, piercing the clouds, seemed to point the way to bliss more perfect still. I had four companions, all older than myself, of whom I was the pet and plaything; my parents, though they sometimes checked the wild merriment of my brothers and sisters—for as such I considered my young associates—yet always

fondled and encouraged their little Miriam ; above all my infant recollections are linked with the form of a venerable man, whose silver locks and furrowed cheeks, strangely distinguishing him from the other beings of my little world, were often the subject of my sportive wonder. In short each seemed born for my service or my pastime.

“ But as infancy was lost in childhood, and childhood in youth ; as the characters of myself and my companions were more fully developed, this flattering illusion vanished ; I became painfully sensible of my comparative insignificance, and of my dependance on the guidance and support of others. Timid, even to weakness, sensitive and yielding, the discovery of my want of firmness and confidence produced a disposition to seriousness and a love of solitude, which my mother vainly sought to moderate. When upon this feebleness of character was superinduced silent endurance, by the tyranny of an imperious spirit, you will scarcely wonder that the buoyancy of mind which marked my childhood, was succeeded, in more mature years, by a fitful melancholy, which gradually became habitual. You will ask who it was that exercised such arbitrary influence over a mind already humble and depressed ; who could crush a spirit so feeble and submissive ; was it parent, guardian, brother, sister, and if not, who could dare to arrogate, who could be permitted to assert

power superior to theirs?—Alas! it was one whose destiny is fatally, singularly involved with mine, who has blighted the spring of my youth, who has heaped obloquy and disgrace on the family that fostered her, who has driven the daughter of a woman that was to her protector, parent, all, a terrified and friendless fugitive, from home, from country; who has made that unhappy being a mark for the finger of scorn, for the sneer of malignity, and who may one day wind further the thread of persecution, by depriving her hitherto patient victim of the friend whom Providence, pitying, at length the frailty of indiscretion, bestows. Heaven shield me from the suggestions of a bitter spirit, while I portray that fatal being, gifted with all her mother's fascinating powers, with all her father's energy and dissimulation, with the beauty of both parents so happily blended, forming such perfect harmony, that they who beheld her wondered at the fair proportions. But you have seen her Doctor Elwin, you have seen Beatrice Sorenzo, her exquisite, her surpassing loveliness; you have felt the witchery of her voice, her air, her manner.—You have seen her again in my Katheren, for never was resemblance more marvellous. You know perhaps part of the misery her duplicity has caused, but you are not acquainted with the wide circuit which her arts embrace, you know not her



deep, her consummate hypocrisy.—Yet what did her dissimulation triumph in the assumption of?—Good or evil?—What in her was natural?—What acquired?—For so well she played the counterfeit, that ‘art did seem like nature.’ At one moment imperious, disdainful, arrogant—the next, humble, conciliating, bashful. The cheek now flushed with passion, without an effort wore the tint of modesty, the eye that flashed disdain, now meekly downcast, or raised with timidly appealing glance, changed the expression of the Proteus face to meekness in its most winning semblance. There was nothing intermediate, no interval of preparation.—As when by Heaven’s rebuke, the angry heaving of the troubled ocean sank to the smoothness of the placid lake, thus sudden was the change in Beatrice.—It was wonderful; it was almost preternatural.

“That a being so insignificant, so inferior in talent and attraction as myself, should have excited the jealousy, incurred the hatred of a person thus gifted with power to become, as it were, what she pleased, argued an inversion of understanding almost incomprehensible, and you will say incompatible with the pride which, next to dissimulation, is the strongest feature in the character of Beatrice Sorenzo; yet this is not the exaggeration of prejudice; perhaps it was that very pride which, aiming at the homage of all within her sphere,

thus operated. Unfortunately for poor Charles Egerton and me I had won his affections, and although, as a suitor Beatrice would have spurned him, yet she never forgave my having, however undesignedly, deprived her of the gratification of thus displaying her power. From childhood Charles was my companion, the indignant retorter of all the taunts and sarcasms cast at me by Beatrice. Philip too, my generous, high spirited and impetuous brother, although attached to Katheren Sorenzo as Charles was to me, yet always supported my cause, while the sweet and gentle Katheren was alternately the soother and peacemaker of the little party. Proud of her sister, and fondly attached to her, Katheren would plead conciliation, even when the haughty Beatrice resented her mild interference, and following to my chamber, whither I would fly from her sister's malice, by soft blandishments and sweet remonstrance she would dry the tears of irritation, and compel me to pity my persecutor.—‘ You weep Miriam,’ would she say; ‘ Alas! blessed with such a mother as yours, I would never weep;—contrast our situations Miriam, we are orphans, outcasts, the very bread we eat the boon of charity; no friend save you and yours.—Believe me, were our lots reversed, Beatrice would be as you—at least I think so—but she is proud, and she feels herself dependent; Charles taunts her with your

excellence; were she the daughter of Lady Mornington, the sister of Philip, the favored pupil of the Count de Berville, and you Beatrice Sorenzo, she would acknowledge your superiority. You smile and now your lips are parted to chide what you will term my flattery.—You shall not scold,’ she would add, playfully pressing her hand to my lips. Thus did this angelic girl try to heal the wounds inflicted by her sister, then, flying to Philip, she would mitigate the exacerbation which might have burst into complaint. But would complaint have availed? The fervid attachment of my mother to Lady Katheren Conwaye had descended to her children; I do not say she loved them better than her own, my noble-minded parent was incapable of such injustice, but she loved them as well, and to this attachment was superadded pity for their orphan state, and another feeling of still more powerful influence. Besides, so well did Beatrice dissemble in my mother’s presence, so sudden was the transition from fury and disdain, to tearful softness, when her guardian appeared, that even my heretofore clear-sighted parent was deceived; conscious of Philip’s attachment to Katheren, and Charles Egerton’s to me, she considered Beatrice the injured party in all disputes, and the bitterness of which she was accused the consequence of alight or neglect.

“But I am describing characters not events,

dwelling on baby griefs which, when beheld through a long vista of woes, seem only as light clouds that obscure for a moment the sunny scenes of my childhood; nor would I have expatiated on such trifles, were I not convinced that in the early tyranny of Beatrice, thus acting on a feeble mind, originated that nervous timidity, that trembling distrust of my own judgment, which has ever made me bend to the will and act on the suggestions of others. I shall require a palliative for indiscretion Doctor Elwin: more than life is at stake, and I must be sincere, even though sincerity imply selfishness.

“I will now briefly relate the situation of the families at La Motte and Clairville, with some events relative to them which occurred prior and subsequent to my birth. Sir Philip and Lady Mornington did not live to witness the extent of the misery which their imprudence had partly caused: they died previous to the flight of Lady Katheren from her husband. Under Sir Philip's will the Devonshire estates were to descend to my brother unincumbered. My father was satisfied with this arrangement, as my brother was three years old and an only child at Sir Philip's decease, nor was I born until two years after the death of the Countess Sorenzo.

“My father died when I was too young to feel

his loss, leaving my mother and the Count de Berville joint guardians of Philip and myself, and they agreed in maintaining that prudent economy which soon retrieved the family estates from all remaining incumbrances, and enabled my brother, when of age, to support his title and the ancient hospitality of Mornington Hall. La Motte was to be mine by settlement, and the small estate of Clairville devolved, at my mother's death, under Sir Philip's will, to the deserted Charles Egerton. My grandfather de Berville was supplicated by my mother to bequeath his unsettled property to the orphan sisters: partial to his infant granddaughter, the Count remonstrated in favor of the little Miriam, and questioned my mother's maternal affection, but she calmly replied that if her daughter were worthy such affection, she would never regret the dross that purchased a parent's consolation. My grandfather at length acquiesced, and it was at the same time determined that the families of La Motte and Clairville should be united, living alternately at either residence, my mother wishing to spend some part of every year at Clairville, which, from its vicinity to Geneva, presented many advantages for the education of her children, and my grandfather unwilling to quit for more than a short period the spot where lay entombed the woman whose benign influence

had changed the rankling irritation of a disappointed spirit to the calm tenor of religious confidence.

“For myself, La Motte was my Eden, the image on earth of that purer paradise to which my dear grandfather would teach the way. I was his favorite, because his most helpless pupil, and to his instructions I owe all the little intellectual store of good which has preserved me from being crushed by calamity.

“Of Katheren Sorenzo and myself it might truly be said ‘we grew together like to a double cherry, a union in partition;’ our tastes, our talents, our pursuits the same—but Beatrice, excelling as much in intellect as in form, reminded us of the poet’s fiction, of her on whom each fabled deity bestowed a gift—all brilliant accomplishments without effort were her own. In this precocity of talent also, my darling Katheren resembles her, yet perhaps in those more desirable acquisitions which the mind retains when the decaying faculties can no longer dazzle with the showy and superficial, Beatrice was our inferior—Blessed be that venerated guide who taught us to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit!

“My brother was preparing to depart for England, to complete his education at Oxford, and the sisters for an introduction to those circles in which it was decided they ought to mix ere Katheren

should be united to Philip, when a new settler appeared at Geneva. A person calling himself Vaneski hired a cottage contiguous to Clairville, on the border of our romantic lake. He introduced himself at La Motte, where we were then residing, and in a short time, by his humour, intelligence and urbanity, became an almost indispensable member of our little society. My grandfather, delighted with the playful manner in which he derided what he termed the tinsel of etiquette, through which, he observed, a plain spoken person could never descry whether the metal beneath were brass or bullion, encouraged his visits, and enjoyed, even more than the youngest of the circle, the varieties of a character whose leading feature was benevolence, obscured at times by a species of drollery and whim which sought to hide the benefits it conferred by ridiculing the weakness of compassion. Though we all shared his kindness, Charles Egerton seemed decidedly his favourite, and when my grandfather would descant on the destitute situation of the orphan boy, a sly smile would curve the mouth of our visitor, and a certain facetious expression contract the corner of his eye; but a hint of his intentions never escaped him, until, about a week previous to my brother's departure for England, he suddenly exclaimed that Charles should accompany him, and fit himself for that rank in society which he was destined

to fill. How every heart, save one, in our little circle throbbed with joy, when our eccentric friend declared himself a younger brother of the deceased Sir Charles Egerton, the possessor of unbounded wealth, and the patron of his orphan nephew! He had been sent to India when a boy, to pursue his fortunes in whatever path he might choose, and renouncing those relatives who had banished him to feed the extravagance of his dissipated brother, despising the miserable pittance which they promised annually to remit, he determined to owe his advancement solely to his own exertions. Dropping all correspondence with his European connexions, forgetting and forgotten, unaided save by Providence, he had risen through progressive gradations to an honourable and lucrative official situation, and after years marked by success, the result of unremitting assiduity and firm integrity, he left India to visit his native country, but with a fixed determination to return to the soil from whence had sprung the riches which had given him the power he most prized, that of assisting those who had been, like himself, deserted.

“Behold then the orphan ward of Sir Philip Mornington, whose noble energies had been cramped, and native spirit crushed, by the consciousness of his father’s imprudence and guilt, resuming that title which during his destitute state it would have been mockery to bear, com-



mencing his career with his once envied friend on the proud footing of equality, and whispering a hope as he embraced his sister Miriam, that he might one day be permitted to call her by a dearer name.—Alas ! neither then nor ever could I view but as a brother the generous being who during his fancied degradation dared not address the daughter of his benefactress, yet, when their situations were reversed, sought, and would have snatched her from sorrow and disgrace.

“ Mr. Vanesk, or rather Vanesk Egerton, for he had merely dropped his surname, accompanied the young men to England for the double purpose of placing them at Oxford, and of arranging his nephew's affairs previous to returning to India, where he was determined to spend the remainder of his life, nor could all the remonstrances of his dear Swiss friends, as he called us, avail against this decided inclination. ‘ I will see you once more Count,’ he said, pressing the hand of my grandfather, ‘ I will again salute that Hecate, Lady Mornington, embrace her three witches, and then fly their enchantments for ever !’

## CHAPTER VI.

---

Was man scheint  
Hat Jederman zum Richter; was man ist hat Keinen.  
SCHILLER.

"THE departure of our three companions caused a melancholy vacuum at La Motte; all, except Beatrice, felt depressed, but her spirits rose in proportion as ours sank; the grass scarce yielded to her elastic tread, as she bounded before Katheren and me, who, pensive and sad, would follow, wondering what new emotion had lighted her countenance with more than common brilliancy, each ascribing her buoyancy to a different cause, Katheren to the delight with which she anticipated her introduction to that world she already, in imagination, beheld at her feet, and I, to exultation at the removal of those whom even her attractions were insufficient to captivate. Do not accuse me of injustice, Doctor Elwin; had not the early opinion I formed of Beatrice been proved

correct by experience, how joyfully would I now confess the error of my judgment!

“ Although two years younger, my disposition had imparted to my features a character of melancholy seriousness which made me seem as old as the sisters. Katheren was slight and delicate, and the figure of Beatrice, though exquisite in proportion, gave then no promise of the majestic height it afterwards attained. Notwithstanding their youthful appearance, my mother determined that immediately after their seventeenth birthday they should be introduced, as she wished Katheren to acquire some knowledge of the world before her marriage. At the appointed time therefore, she removed with the sisters to Clairville, for the purpose of again mixing in those circles at Geneva from which she had withdrawn on the death of her husband, leaving me happy with my dear grandfather at La Motte. My mother, however, accompanied by her wards, often visited our solitude, when Katheren would amuse me by a description of her new life, which, notwithstanding its novelty, suited neither her taste nor constitution. Her form was of that almost transparent elightness which suggests to the beholder fearful apprehensions of decay; with fevered cheek and tremulous earnestness, she would expatiate on the admiration which Beatrice had won, on the idolatry of her lovers, the despair of the rejected, and

the emulation of those who still hoped, while for herself the sweet girl would disclaim having excited any applause, the bare acknowledgment of which she fancied would interfere with her devotion to Philip. Beatrice, on the contrary, although before my mother and the Count she wore her triumphs meekly, yet when with me would descant arrogantly on her conquests, would deride the poor pretenders to her favor, because they were untitled, would wonder what success Lady Egerton would meet, what sensation her charms would create, and, with mock humility, would wind up her taunting speech by declaring she already foresaw her eclipse in the splendour of my transit. I have wept, bitterly wept at these sarcasms, but heaven knows it was not from mortified vanity; it was at the sad conviction that the being I could have dearly loved regarded me with enmity, I may say, with hatred. Had it been in my power, I would have raised her to royalty, and asked in return but a sister's affection: as it was, how ardently I prayed that, were it for good, her ambition might meet its fullest gratification.

“At length my wishes and hers seemed near fulfilment; Viscount Conway, the only son of the Earl of Dunane, came to Geneva, obtained an introduction to my mother, and avowed that the object of his visit was to become acquainted with his cousins. You must have known Lord Con-

waye, Doctor Elwin, and you may imagine with what feelings my mother—to whom the name of Conwaye was in itself sufficient recommendation—looked on the interesting countenance of her youthful visitor. At last she spoke; she dwelt on the wrongs of Lady Katheren, the inflexible severity of the Conwaye family, her own unanswered letter, in which she had announced the birth of the twin sisters, the silence, the neglect of seventeen years, and concluded by enquiring whether Lord Conwaye were authorised by his father to request this introduction. The young man replied, that it was from his aunt St. Elmour he had heard of his cousins; from the moment he had learned their existence, with all the particulars of their affecting story, his intention had been to seek them, to proffer his friendship, to entreat their pardon for the harshness of his father.—His mother had never shared her husband's feeling; she was all gentleness, and his aunt yearned to see her sister's children: it was true, the Earl had extorted from her a promise that without his consent she would not communicate with Lady Mornington; still he, Lord Conwaye, was so certain of his mother's influence and his own, that he foresaw no opposition when once his father should be convinced it was his son's determination to be just to his injured cousins. Their mother had been disinherited in favor of

his, but he was resolved, should it ever be in his power, to right the orphans.

“ My mother listened to the eloquent pleader, was convinced of his sincerity, and saw nothing to justify dissent from his conclusions. The wishes of an only child, would, she thought, prevail against that rancorous spirit which time must have already softened, if not subdued. Still she was irresolute, but at length, yielding to his prayer, she threw open the door of communication between the apartment in which they were seated and that which the sisters occupied.

“ To behold Beatrice and to love her were simultaneous with Lord Conways; but should such love as his be given to mortal? it was idolatry! while she, incited by ambition, uninfluenced by his virtues, plighted her faith to him, only because he could raise her to the pinnacle to which she aspired.

“ It was with feelings of pity and esteem that I regarded this ill fated young man. I looked from him to Beatrice, and trembled; there was something celestial in the expression of his countenance, and a frame delicate even to effeminacy, a complexion almost transparent, and a voice feeble though melodious, excited involuntary and powerful interest. ‘ Is such a creature,’ thought I, ‘ in mind scarcely mortal, the destined partner of that imperious girl?—As well might the es

be mated with the dove!' My mother, however, saw nothing disproportionate in this union. Lord Conway, though he looked younger, was a year older than his cousin; she was his equal in birth, talent, education, and alas! his superior in energy and intellect—at least in that intellect, which governs every spirit, save its own. But where in her were the breathings of that angelic mind which irradiated the features of him whose beautification you might, with certainty have predicted? There were no links to connect such opposite natures.

“Although my mother did not think herself compelled to humour the tyranny and caprice of the Earl of Dunane, by keeping the cousins separated, yet she would by no means encourage a son's attachment in opposition to a parent's wishes, and, always peremptory when she knew herself to be right, on the first intimation of Lord Conway's partiality for Beatrice, she prohibited his visits until they should be authorised by his father, earnestly recommending him to submit his wishes to the Earl by letter. The young man felt he had too much at stake to trust so feeble an advocate; words might fail, but the eloquence with which a passion like his would inspire him, must prevail. A despatch announcing the illness of his mother determined the point; confident of success, he bade adieu to his betrothed, and departed for

Ireland, promising soon to elaim, with his parents' approbation, a bride. His letters however, although they breathed the spirit of constancy, and hope unaltered, yet for a time spoke not of, certainty. At length my mother received one from the Countess of Dunane, which conveyed her and the Earl's approval, with the tardy expression of their gratitude to Lady Mornington for the protection she had granted their nieces.

"Lord Conwaye wrote in a strain which proved his fidelity; nothing damped his joy but the impossibility of flying at once to his beloved cousin; his mother had been alarmingly ill; she had suffered severely from anxiety on his account, having pleaded his cause with all the warmth of maternal affection. She was still so weak that he dared not leave her; he had indeed encountered more opposition from his father than he had expected, and, but for his mother——. However he would now only speak of his happiness and submit to Lady Mornington the plan that was arranged. His aunt St. Elmour was at length at liberty to seek her sister's children, and would, with Lady Mornington's permission, take charge of his beloved Beatrice to Ireland. He had his father's promise that his mother's health once reestablished, he should be united to his cousin, and then how joyfully would he return with his bride to Geneva! perhaps accompanied by the Earl and Countess.



“Such was the substance of Lord Conway’s letter, but my mother was too penetrating to be deceived by the representations of a lover; she saw clearly that concurrence with their son’s wishes had been extorted from, not granted by, the parents, and determined to express this opinion, and let Beatrice herself decide whether her attachment to Lord Conway were sufficiently steady to induce her to overlook a forced consent, and powerful enough to support her ’mid the coldness and prejudice of his family—‘You are to recollect Beatrice,’ said my mother, after she had delivered her sentiments on the letters, ‘that you are not destitute; as to fortune you and Katheren are on an equality with my daughter; your sister is contracted to my son, and when his wife, will meet the fondest congratulations. Would you forsake us for those who may receive you with less affection? True the Earl of Dunane ranks higher than Sir Philip Mornington, but there are many things which counterbalance this trifling superiority—a strange country, connexions untried, prejudiced, perhaps severe.’ Beatrice at once prevented further discussion, by expressing her determination to accompany her aunt St. Elmour to Ireland, qualifying however what might have been deemed ingratitude, by throwing herself into my mother’s arms, and protesting that her affection for Lady Mornington was alone sur-

passed by her fervent attachment to her cousin, that no ambitious views influenced her decision, and that Conway's assurance of bringing her again to Geneva was, next to her love for him, the chief inducement to this union.

"My mother was satisfied, and I confounded: there was so much seeming simplicity, candour, and bashfulness, in the words, looks and tone of Beatrice as she murmured this confession, that it must have duped any one who was not, like me, aware of her dissimulation, who knew not as I did, that ambition and vanity were her ruling propensities.

"A few days after we had received these letters, Mr. Vanesk returned to La Motte; he had satisfactorily settled his nephew's affairs, and intended to pass a few months with my grandfather previous to embarking for India. Charles and Philip were well, in high spirits, anticipating a visit to Switzerland the following year. Katheren, who, had pined at Philip's absence, was revived by this intelligence, and endeavoured to look forward with resignation to a separation from her sister, whom she loved with enthusiasm.

"Twenty years had elapsed since my mother had committed Lady Katheren Conway to the care of Colonel and Lady Mary St. Elmour, to be conducted home. The present visit of Lady Mary to Geneva for nearly a similar purpose, awakened all

my mother's painful recollections, and she looked forward to this meeting with a gloomy foreboding, the more remarkable because entirely foreign to her usually sanguine and cheerful temper. Lady Mary arrived soon after a letter which announced her approach, even then lovely and interesting. She was accompanied by one who performed a dark and mysterious part in that fearful tragedy of which the awful catastrophe destroyed the hopes of the Dunane family—I speak of Charles St. Elmour, a being

‘ In shape and gesture proudly eminent,’

and, like the apostate angel, also ambitious, daring, reckless. Sunk at once from the heir to the dependent of the Earl, by the birth of his cousin, his features had contracted what might be termed a smile of derision at the mediocrity of his fortunes, while his haughty bearing marked the man who would wrestle with fate rather than perform the part of a subordinate. As my eye dwelt on him with wonder, almost with fear, I internally ejaculated, ‘ this, Beatrice, is thy kindred spirit,’ and when his mother presented him to the sisters I noted well the start of astonishment induced by the beauty of Beatrice, and her but half suppressed smile of gratified vanity, which she sought to conceal by a timid downcast look.

From that moment my prophetic spirit saw the wreck of poor Conwaye's happiness! A congeniality of tastes and temperaments attached me to that ill-fated young man; our serious and melancholy dispositions seemed, alas, an earnest of our future fates. I have wept over his tomb, and at the overthrow of all my own earthly hopes!

"Lady Mary's immediate return to Ireland was prevented by indisposition. I marked the cousins; their well acted indifference could not cheat the eye which friendship for poor Conwaye rendered keen sighted; even through the coldness and formality which each assumed towards the other, I saw the intensity of their attachment, at least of his, for at this moment I cannot decide whether the heart of Beatrice was really touched, or whether she was alone swayed by the vanity of subjugating such a mind as his, a mind more imperious than her own, only because it was more powerful; but I knew Beatrice, too well, to waver in my judgment as to which of the cousins she would select; she might prefer the one, but she would wed the other; at least such was my anticipation.

"One day, as we sat together, she expatiated on her prospect of future splendour. I ventured to hint that a life of retirement would be more consonant with the habits and health of Lord Conwaye. Irritated at a suggestion which struck

at the gratification of her ruling propensities, she lost her usual self-possession, and burst into passionate regret that a person so formed to adorn exalted rank as Charles St. Elmeur, should be superseded by a puny boy;—‘but his death may yet restore Charles to the height from which he has been hurled,’ she continued; ‘Conway should have moved in a lower sphere, and would then have suited you to a miracle, Miriam, but me——’ She turned her brilliant eyes full upon me, and stopped, confounded by the expression of my countenance. I was horror-struck; my most amplified conception of her duplicity and selfishness had not reached to this. The saint-like being who had sought her out, had promised to be her protector, even before he was enthralled by her beauty, had braved for her sake the resentment of his father and (what I knew to him was still more trying) the silent anguish of his mother, whose letters breathed the very spirit of love, and who was deceived by written rhapsodies of high flown sentiment, to be thus mentioned with contempt, his degradation desired, his very existence deplored! But I had scarcely time for thought; the tumultuous emotion which swelled the face of Beatrice, sank at once into a smile:—‘how completely have I succeeded in deluding you Miriam,’ she cried, ‘what an actress I should make! now are you thoroughly convinced that I do not love

dear Conway, and you will mope mayhap, and deprecate the fraud that has deceived your absent friend; beware lest I impart to Egerton the extent of your platonics for my darling Conway; but be tranquil, I will not injure one who feels so deeply for my lover.' Had you witnessed, Doctor Elwin, the flashing transition in tone, look and manner, you would, like me, have ejaculated. 'monstrous!' Beatrice saw she was discovered, and hated with greater intensity than before the trembling creature who had not art enough to conceal her abhorrence.

"A month elapsed, and still Lady Mary lingered at Geneva, vainly anticipating renovation of health, for she too was struck by that insidious disease which lurks in the Conway family. My mother's looks, solicitous and apprehensive, wandered from Lady Mary to the pale and delicate Katheren; she dared not, by expressing her fears, awaken to anxiety the susceptible mind of her destined daughter, but to me she imparted this painful inquietude, and expressed her determination that, the dreaded parting with Beatrice once over, she would send for her son, and accelerate his marriage.

"There was a member of our little society who looked as apprehensively on Lady Mary as my mother did on Katheren: I was sitting one day with my grandfather and Mr. Vanesk at La Motte,

when the latter, who had been for a long time immersed in thought, rose abruptly, paced the room in apparent perturbation, then suddenly stopping, burst forth,—‘Plague take it friend, ’tis too bad that I, who was heart-whole at sixteen, should feel heart-broken at sixty—and for a woman too! but such a woman!—Count she shall not die, I’ll make the fortune of the man who saves her, or, if she can’t be saved, I’ll go to heaven with her. You need not speak Count, I know all her history from Lady Mornington, and I will befriend her. She’s worse than destitute, for she depends upon a tyrant. And that fine haughty looking fellow who seems too proud to take a boon, I’ll make him rich against his will—I’ll—I’ll marry his mother Count, if she will have me!’ And this eccentric but benevolent man did really offer himself to Lady Mary, influenced by no other motives than generosity and pity.—‘Alas Sir!’ said the unfortunate woman, who fully understood and appreciated the sentiments which dictated this singular proceeding, ‘my affections are in my husband’s grave, my hopes in heaven! I can never name another by that title which should belong to one alone.—Not even for my children would I falsify a solemn vow. Yet I would bespeak your friendship for my son; a life of celibacy and seclusion is marked out for my daughter, but Charles!—perhaps when I am

gone—' Say no more, for God's sake say no more,' stammered Mr. Vanesk; 'I will not take the youth with me, it would destroy you, but soon—' He looked at her emaciated form, and seemed choked by emotion. 'Here,' he continued at length, 'here is my address; if fortune alight him, let him come to Vanesk, I'll throw the jade into his arms; no one will suffer; my nephew has more than he wishes for, and still I am wealthy; that sly, insinuating witch Mirlam, I once meant should have the residue of my fortune, but Charles has told me a tale of which she is the heroine; Katheren has chosen that fiery Philip, and Madam Beatrice must be a Countess. Thus what can I do with my dross? I have no child of my own; I'll give it to yours.—'Tis really delightful to be relieved from such perplexity. I hope you'll not descend to flattery, to thank an old man for gratifying his whim. Why I am the most pleased of the party.'

'We were all present at this singular scene, for our egocentric friend was as frank as benevolent. The next day he took his last leave of Switzerland. Lady Mary, although she would not part with her son, seemed comforted by the conviction that in adversity he would find a friend whose heart could bear any test, and now, animated to exertion, prepared for returning to her native country. It might have been fancy, but I



often thought that she did not feel equal affection for her nieces: Katheren she idolised, but her countenance sometimes wore a peculiar, and not a pleasing expression, when she looked at Beatrice, particularly after speaking of her own daughter: her eyes would fill with tears, she would cast a glance of mingled regret and irritation at Beatrice, while a still deeper shade of despondency would steal over her lovely features; yet such was her uniform gentle elegance of manner, that this slight petulance which her countenance betrayed, could not have been detected, save by one who, like myself, observant and reflective, had made human nature a peculiar study, even from her earliest years.

“Once, as Lady Mary slightly hinted at the advantages of the connexion her niece was about to form, Beatrice rather proudly observed she was herself, a Conwaye. The aunt became suddenly discomposed; she seemed to suppress an ejaculation, and sought to conceal beneath a smile, an emotion which I interpreted as one of apprehension. ‘My dear unfortunate sister,’ said Lady Mary, after a pause, ‘would never call herself a Conwaye; by her mother, the Countess Gertrude, my father’s second wife, she was a Macarthy, and she always prided herself on being a descendant of that noble house. It is remarkable that my nephew Conwaye, who is by his mother (a niece

of the Countess Gertrude) also one of the same family, has an equal prejudice in favour of the great Macarthies. — ‘Then I,’ said Beatrice, laughing, ‘though an alien, am certainly a Macarthy, and still equal in birth to my cousin.’ The emotion of Lady Mary now became unconquerable, she hurried from the room, and, too much terrified to attend to etiquette, I followed, even to her private apartment. My sympathy was so sincere and deep that Lady Mary was won to confidence. ‘My dear Miriam,’ she said, ‘when I reveal the cause of my terror, you will, instead of pitying, smile at my weakness; educated in the Protestant faith, you have been early taught to check the slightest tendency to superstition, and you will laugh when I tell you that the source of my silly panic lies in a singular and almost forgotten prophecy, which the foolish boast of Beatrice brought to my memory. The ruin of the Macarthies by a branch of that family springing from a foreign soil has been predicted for ages; its representatives in our country are my brother’s wife, her son, and my own children, who by a singular coincidence are, through my husband, descendants of another branch of the Macarthies. But Miriam, this weakness must not be imparted even to your mother; you are too acute not to penetrate the motive for this injunction.’

“ How frequently in after years has this singular prediction recurred to my memory, accompanied with an almost superstitious belief of its fulfilment !

## CHAPTER VII.

He died; but his Tartarean subtlety  
(Fell inspiration of demoniac spirit!  
Transfused into a kindred substance) liv'd,  
For purposes we may not scrutinize.

“SHORTLY after this incident Lady Mary left us, accompanied by her son and Beatrice; their intention was to proceed to Bordeaux, and there embark for Ireland, as Lady Mary's strength was unequal to protracted land travelling. The voyage however was unfortunate; a violent storm drove them from their course, upon the northern coast of Spain, where they narrowly escaped shipwreck, and their vessel, in a distressed state, put into the harbour of Gijon, where the party landed. Here they fortunately encountered a friend of Mr. St. Elmour, an ecclesiastic named Karwin, then on his way to the Jesuit's college at Oviedo; he calmed the apprehensions by ministering to the spiritual wants of Lady Mary, who had been terribly agitated by the fear of dying without such

solace. They were detained nearly a month at Gijon, by her illness, but their second voyage proved more propitious, and they arrived without further accident, at Dunane Castle.

“ The description which Beatrice gave us of her Irish relatives and their residence, did not create any strong prepossessions in favor of either ; the Earl was haughty, taciturn, severe, and sullen even to moroseness ; the Countess might have proved more amiable had she been in health, but she was too ill even to converse, and never left her chamber. The castle in consequence was comfortless and gloomy. The Earl glided like a ghost, the servants stole on tiptoe, and seemed his attendant sprights, Lady Mary resembled a breathing skeleton, and her daughter was a moping and melancholy ascetic, who spoke in monosyllables, with suppressed tone and solemn gestures. No strangers were ever seen within the scowling old castle, but the family physician and the confidential agent, no living thing descried from the frowning battlements, save the eagle soaring from the beetling cliff.— ‘ How often,’ wrote Beatrice, ‘ have I wished for its wings, to waft me to dear Switzerland ! Once more with my beloved Lady Mornington, shall grandeur again lure me from her ?—Were it not,’ she proceeded, ‘ for Conwaye’s foster-mother (a woman superior far to the sphere in which she moves,) who lives in a pretty cot-

tage near the castle, I should pine and pout like Mary St. Elmour. Charles, Conwayne and I, spend many a pleasant hour in her parlour, as she calls it; my heart feels lighter when I sit at her little casement, from its sprightly contrast with the deep-set, dungeon-like windows of the castle, which reminds one of old Chillon. There is Peggy too, my friend Ileen's daughter and St. Elmour's foster-sister, another link in that curious chain denominated fosterage, which in this country connects the peasant with the peer. Nay we sometimes succeed in luring the pious Mary to join our social party.'

"Such was the substance of the letter to my mother; to Katheren, Beatrice wrote in the same strain, except that her sarcastic remarks on the castle inmates were still keener, and she added a circumstance which distressed us much more than her selfish disappointment of the splendour and gaiety she had anticipated—'Conwayne,' she said, 'has conceived the most causeless jealousy of Charles St. Elmour; he has become peevish and irritable; his mother's illness necessarily protracts our union; I am condemned to bear his reproachful looks and querulous complaints, till I am almost sick of the shackles to which I have submitted. Should this continue, I will entreat Charles to reconduct me to my friends. My cousin Mary too is lynx-eyed and suspicious; she hovers round us

with sanctified face and hypocrite cant, emulating in watchfulness the fabled guardian of the golden fruit. In short I am surrounded by spies, and sincerely do I wish myself at Clairville. As to Mary, I am persuaded she herself loves Conways secretly, and is actuated in her conduct to me by envy alone—Say nothing of this however to Lady Mornington; it would only distress her.'

"Katheren pitied her sister and deplored her uncomfortable situation, but I was not duped by this specious letter; my opinion of Conways could not be shaken; I felt that the sting must be keen, indeed, which could render such a temper as his peevish or irritable, and I was persuaded that Beatrice was feeding her inordinate vanity, by preserving her power over both cousins, and deceiving each. These sentiments however I concealed from Katheren, and we agreed not to disturb my mother by communicating what she could not remedy.

"Beatrice continued to write in the same tone of despondency, but as she spoke no longer of Conway's jealousy, we hoped it had subsided. My mother smiled at what she termed childish complaints, and looked forward with confidence to the time when Beatrice, united to her cousin, would be free to rejoin those friends in whose welcomes she would forget her petty grievances. Katheren mean-time was languid and depressed; my mother

had been prevented sending for my brother by the Count de Berville.—‘I should tremble for Philip,’ said my grandfather, ‘if united to that sweet creature; he would risk his all of happiness on her life, and perhaps lose her; we must endeavour to conquer, in some degree, her constitutional delicacy; winter is approaching, take her to Italy.’ The very name brought bitter recollection to my mother, who, however, after many painful struggles, prepared to revisit that country, making my improvement in painting and music the ostensible motive for our tour.

“Accompanied by some Genevese friends we travelled from Aosta to Naples, our movements regulated by the will and looks of Katheren, who seemed so renovated by this excursion, that my mother lost in her joy at the revival of one sister, the anxiety she sometimes felt for the other, ascribing to accident, occasioned by our desultory life, the delay of that intelligence we had hitherto periodically received from Beatrice.

“At length Katheren herself began to feel too much alarmed for her sister to benefit by longer absence from home, and we returned to Geneva, hoping there to find the expected letters. A packet indeed awaited our arrival, but it had reached Clairville only that morning, and our confidential servant Annette declared no other, during our absence, had arrived from Ireland. It was from



Beatrice. My mother broke the seal and read—think Doctor Elwin of our horror and grief—Charles St. Elmour, in a fit of jealous fury, had stabbed Lord Conways in his foster-mother's cottage. Beatrice had been accused as the cause of this catastrophe, had been cast off by her relatives, and compelled to take refuge with Helen Sullivan. Charles St. Elmour was denounced by the Earl as the murderer of his son, and imprisoned, the Countess was dead, Lady Mary, Miss St. Elmour, all had abandoned the unfortunate girl, who called herself the innocent cause of these complicated calamities.

“My mother looked wildly at the letter, and clasped her hands in agony; it was dated three months back! during this frightful interval what might have happened? where was her darling, her deserted Beatrice? She seemed distracted; alternately accusing herself and Lady Mary. At length she decided on setting out for Ireland immediately. This determination roused me from my stupor; I pointed to Katheren; she was ‘pale as monumental marble,’ her hands crossed over her bosom, her eyes raised to heaven. My mother paced the room, now soothing Katheren, now questioning Annette, who persisted in her assertion that the letter had arrived only that morning; our surmise was, that the unfortunate girl, in her despair and perplexity, had neglected to forward it

when written.—‘But how came it,’ interposed Annette, who perceived that something terrible had happened, ‘that Miss Beatrice, finding her letter unanswered, did not write another?’

“‘She is dead!’ said Katheren, solemnly; ‘they have murdered her too!’ The first conclusion was not inconsequent; such superadded horrors were quite sufficient to overwhelm an unprotected girl.

“The arrival of my grandfather, who came from La Motte to welcome our return, I really believe saved my mother’s reason; never before had I seen her deprived of energy and self-possession. The Count suppressed all comment on our dreadful tale.—‘I will write to Philip,’ said he; ‘he is at a comparatively trifling distance from Ireland; I can answer for his activity, else I would go myself. I will also write to the Earl of Dunane. Be composed my daughter; you will soon see the poor girl—and you, Miriam, moderate this wild grief, and look to Katheren.’ The thought of writing to Philip seemed to my mother’s distracted mind like inspiration; for the sake of Katheren we assumed composure, but our hearts were filled with grief and terror.

“A letter from Philip dispelled our anxiety respecting Beatrice; he had travelled night and day until he reached Dunane Castle, where he saw only a domestic, who informed him that the Earl,

since the death of his wife and son, had scarcely quitted his chamber, and never admitted strangers. Lady Mary was not at the castle; she had gone that morning to Tralee to see Mr. St. Elmour, who was to be tried the next day. Miss St. Elmour was shut up with her uncle, and he dared not disturb them, but the foreign lady was at Mrs. Sullivan's cottage, which he would point out. My brother, indignant at this reception, (a letter to the Earl having announced his approach,) immediately quitted the inhospitable mansion, and went in quest of Beatrice, to whom he had also written. She flew to meet him, in a state of terrible excitement; though ghastly, wasted, and evidently indisposed, with desperate energy she besought him to take her from that detested country; the slightest hint of delay threw her into agonies, and though often fainting from weakness, she still urged him to proceed, nor permitted herself the shortest repose until they embarked.—‘The hunted felon,’ continued Philip, ‘could not press more precipitate flight.’

“Soon after this letter, the travellers arrived, but my mother feared she had recovered this darling object of her solicitude only to lose her for ever. Beatrice was immediately attacked by fever and delirium, the consequence, we supposed, of over excitement and fatigue; her ravings were wild, horrid and mysterious; my mother and I

alternately watched her, and endeavoured to keep Katheren as much as possible in ignorance of her sister's danger. At length our unremitting care was requited. She recovered, but still nervous and languid, was unable for many weeks to quit her chamber.

"We were sitting with her one morning, when my mother drew a letter from her pocket—'It is addressed to you Beatrice,' said she, 'and arrived during your illness; have you strength to peruse it?'—The excited girl almost snatched the paper, looked at the handwriting, shuddered, and, with a sort of desperate resolve, tore it open. A gleam of pleasure and triumph overspread her countenance as her eye hurriedly caught the contents; she perused it a second time more calmly, and then, tearing the paper into the most minute particles, sank back upon her chair, exhausted—'I fear my love,' said my mother, 'you are at present too weak to explain.' 'My only friend,' cried Beatrice, suddenly rising, and grasping my mother's hand, 'I anticipate all you would say, but you are already acquainted with the outlines of these dreadful events which, alas! will haunt me to my grave. You would not see me die—ask me not then to detail the particulars—could it please such a heart as yours that I should dwell on the cruelty of my mother's sister, of my nearest relatives? No dear Lady Murnington, let me be silent, and

them uncensured, at least by you—reproach them not, let them be to us as if they never were. I have just received—the wretch who — she stopped, as if overpowered by emotion—‘he who by destroying my loved Conwaye made my life a blank, has at length met the requital of his crimes—that letter related the awful termination of his mad career; it was from his foster-mother; she effected his escape from prison, he fled to the sea coast and embarked on board a smuggling vessel; it was wrecked, every soul on board perished!—And now,’ she continued, ‘may I never more be called on to speak of these terrible events; rather dear mother—for are you not my mother?—rather try to steal my mind from such retrospection, for I feel it may madden me.’

“When Beatrice began to speak, I listened with breathless interest; my eyes were fixed on her face, with intense expectation; as she touched on the cruelty of Lady Mary, I involuntarily murmured ‘impossible’. I marked the solicitude with which she sought, under the semblance of magnanimity, to cast oblivion on the dark transaction, and I shuddered with horror at the exultation which lighted up her countenance as she related the miserable end of that singularly splendid being who for her had bartered fame on earth and bliss in heaven!

“Beatrice knew that by one of her hearers she

was regarded with keen scrutiny; this, however, she rather felt than saw, for she had studiously avoided looking towards me as she spoke. Curiosity, or perhaps fear, at length induced a glance of enquiry, which was followed by one of deadly malice, when she caught the incredulous expression of my countenance. She turned abruptly to my mother—‘Miriam is grown,’ said she, ‘I could scarcely have imagined such improvement possible in the course of twelvemonths—my dear Miriam,’ she continued, bending forward and kissing my cheek, ‘shall I ever be enabled to repay your care?’ I pleaded sudden indisposition and quitted the room; my head was really bewildered, and my heart oppressed.

“A few months restored Beatrice to health, animation and beauty. More dazzling, more bewitching than ever, she realised the most exalted conception of female fascination. My mother regarded her with added tenderness; incapable of suspecting duplicity in one so young, apparently so artless, she saw in her narrative nothing incongruous, in her conduct nothing worse than imprudence, pardonable at her age, and more than adequately punished. As she viewed with increasing admiration the surpassing loveliness of her ward, she sought no other cause for the rivalry of the cousins, and, deeply resenting the conduct of the Conways, she determined never to renew the

slightest correspondence with any of that family, with whose distress she would have sincerely sympathised, but for their injustice to her darling Beatrice.

"It was arranged that the marriage of Philip and Katherine should take place as soon as the mourning for the Countess and Lord Conwaye should expire. My introduction to the world was fixed for the same period, as I had completed my seventeenth year. Gloom was gradually giving way to cheerfulness, and, save by me, the late events were thought of but as a fearful dream. It was decided that Philip should not return to college, and Sir Charles Egerton's arrival still further operated to dispel that regret which I alone thought too transient. My first trial was caused by this generous young man; I could not grant the affection he solicited, and he left us for his family seat in Northumberland.

"Beatrice, Katherine and I were sitting one morning in our little salon at Clairville, the projecting window of which almost overhangs the lake, when Philip, his laughing eyes glittering with joy, rushed into the room, an open letter in his hand. He flung his arms around my neck and kissed my cheek. Accustomed to such sudden ebullitions of his ardent and impetuous temper, I quietly continued my occupation, while Katherine smilingly enquired the cause of his ex-

uberant mirth. 'You mistake Kate,' he shouted, 'tis not mirth, 'tis joy, rapture, extacy; he in whose praise I have been garrulous till you vowed your senses sickened at his name, he who surpasses (nay you will soon confess it) all the fabled heroes whose monstrously marvellous exploits you and Miriam feed on uncloyed, though enough to vapour any mortal but yourselves, he who when he called me friend first taught me to value the madcap Philip, he is coming, will be here to-morrow.—What think you now fair dames? the Earl of Blessingham is coming!'—Beatrice started, and dropped her pencil. 'Kiss me again Miriam,' cried Philip, 'I could sing, shout, caper, be anything but rational!' Katherine laughed. 'Right Kate,' he continued, 'that suits my mood, Miriam's composure makes me mad; there she sits, like penitence, although the principal party concerned.' My gaze of astonishment increased his mirth. 'The very face, look, air,' he shouted; 'stand up Miriam, stand up.' Mechanically I obeyed, almost terrified at his vehemence. 'The very criterion he has assigned for beauty in the female form,' pursued Philip, 'not towering, not majestic, the graceful bend of sweet humility, flexible yet dignified, slight, soft, endearing, suing protection, not arrogating sufficiency; and then the countenance; deep blue eyes, beaming celestial seriousness through fringes dark and silky, fea-



tures Grecian, expression pensive, with a dash of sentiment—'tis the breathing idol of my friend's imagination !'

“ It is necessary that I should repeat this rhapsody, which only the fondness of a doating brother could have framed, before I relate the occurrences of this, to me, fatally eventful day. I had been too much accustomed to such effusions of Philip's partiality, to feel either pleased or pained by his flattery ; my attention on the present occasion was more attracted by Beatrice, who, with flushed and angry countenance, bent over her easel, to conceal those emotions which my brother's exaggerated portraiture of me had awakened. Philip's eye followed mine ; he smiled.—‘ I repeat it Miriam,’ said he, ‘ you are exactly the woman to entrap the heart of Lord Blessingham.’

“ ‘ I would rather attach than entrap,’ said I, smiling and resuming my seat.

“ ‘ Miriam,’ observed Katheren, who delighted to echo Philip's flattery, ‘ reminds me of Shakspeare's sweetest character, Imogen.’

“ ‘ And me also,’ burst forth Beatrice, affecting composure, while her tremulous voice betrayed the secret workings of a troubled spirit ; ‘ she reminds me too of Shakspeare ; of ‘ the infant mewling in the nurse's arms ;’ I pity such maudlin heroïnes, fit companions for age and imbecility alone.’

•

“The playful mirth which had animated Philip's face, fled on the instant; his wrathful eye surveyed the offender. ‘Beatrice,’ he said, in turn aiming at composure, while every vein swelled with indignation, ‘Beatrice,’ he repeated, as if to fix attention on the fearful explosion, ‘you are the embodied revelation of the evil principle—shame, shame! get thee to a nunnery woman,’ he shouted, worked to fury by the fixed, cold, contemptuous look of her he addressed, ‘thou art the heroine of a tale ‘whose lightest word would harrow up the soul;’—there Madam, I can cite as well as you, and with more apt quotation.’

“Beatrice had started from her seat, stung to the quick by his allusion; she stood like the Pythian priestess bewildered by the intoxicating exhalation; her form seemed to dilate, she raised her arms wildly, and exclaimed, in a tone subdued even to hoarseness by the violence of her emotion, ‘Cowardly reviler of a defenceless woman, is it thus you return jest with insult, the touch of the pointless arrow, winged by a woman's hand, with the dagger's deadly thrust?—And for whom? for yon sycophant, who wears that look of martyr endurance because she would be commended as a model of humility, and cherished for her weakness. In what is she my superior? in what my equal?’

“‘Thank heaven, in nothing!’ cried Philip,

impetuously, 'there are no corresponding sympathies in your natures:—look there,' he cried, 'behold my Miriam, angelic in her meekness,—now look here,'—he pointed to a large mirror before which Beatrice stood—'behold that face distorted by baleful passion, those eyes irradiating envy, malignity, and compare yourself with my sister, my pure, my spotless-minded Miriam!'

"Katheren wrung her hands, and wept.—'Philip, Philip,' I exclaimed, but Philip had unconsciously struck some chord which jarred every fibre in the form of Beatrice; she writhed, she was convulsed; the symmetry of the lovely features had given way to frightful contortion. I knelt to her, I implored:—'Hypocrite!' she cried, her rage at length finding vent in rapid revilings and impious anathema, 'officious observer, you have then imparted to others your wild suspicions, the offspring of your distempered fancy—may your heart be torn by tortures more poignant than those you have inflicted, may you become the object of contumely and scorn, abandoned and disgraced!—And you shall!' she shrieked, with fearful energy, 'I swear it!' She spurned me from her, shook back her clustering ringlets, cast at Philip the glance of a demoniac, and rushed from the apartment.

"'Shall Miriam submit to this?' cried Philip, 'never!—Katheren, Katheren, leave me—' She

clung to him with piteous entreaty; he broke from her faint grasp and quitted us. I sprang from my knees, nerved by terror, and followed; Philip had already reached my mother's chamber, which was at the opposite end of the corridor; it communicated with a small oratory, within which no one had ever dared intrude, unsummoned, but my brother, forgetting respect in indignation, burst open the forbidden door, and stood before her—'Lady Mornington,' he gasped, 'are we all to mince before your favorite? Is my sister to be insulted by your dependent? Is the object of your charity to revile the daughter of my father?—I have submitted too long—too long has Miriam borne the taunts of your divinity—Choose between her and Beatrice; if you continue to shield the one, I withdraw and will protect the other.'

"'Sir Philip Mornington,' said my mother, proudly but calmly—my brother started; it was the first time she had thus addressed him—'Sir Philip Mornington, retire, nor again intrude, until you can recollect the respect due to a parent—no remonstrance Sir; if you question the authority, I renounce the title of a mother.' Philip, pale with suppressed emotion, bowed and withdrew.

"During this scene, I stood in the doorway, trembling at my brother's temerity—'Miriam,' said my mother, gravely, 'are you here also, to upbraid and expostulate?'

“To have followed the impulse which would have cast me at my mother’s feet, would have been to make Philip’s conduct seem doubly culpable by contrast; I stood mute and motionless.

“‘Surely,’ she continued, ‘my daughter comes not too, to vilify the forsaken being who looks to us alone for pity!’—My heart fluttered; I could not speak—‘Anger is a fearful passion Miriam; when wreaked on the weak and destitute it is hateful—A word, a look, something as light, as easily repelled as a feather has occasioned this effervescence. I require no explanation; your emotion will soon subside, and you will then smile at the trifle which excited it.’—She took my hand, and led me forward—‘Miriam, you have often perhaps thought me unkind in excluding you from a privacy into which I admitted your companions, Beatrice and Katheren, but, my child, you must remember their creed and mine differs from yours. It was your father’s wish that his children should be firm to that faith in which he lived and died; I would not influence the imagination before the judgment was formed, and for that reason alone, I prohibited your being present at those religious observances which, during the heyday of youth and happiness, I had too much neglected. This is the explanation of one part of my conduct; now for another—Alas! I once thought my children would scorn to investigate the motives of that which

their hearts ought to approve—Nay Miriam, speak not, I will not listen to assertions which actions disprove—else why a partner in your brother's intrusion?—Do not weep my dear child, I mean not to reproach, but to request attention—are you disposed to listen to the particulars of a sad tale, which is but imperfectly known to you?

“Wounded by suspicions which, however corroborated by circumstances, I was conscious were undeserved, and awed by my mother's impressive solemnity of manner, I bowed in silence—‘Look around you Miriam,’ said my mother, ‘you will perceive there is nothing in this sanctuary to attract or repel, no appendants of rites or forms, which can disgust the unprejudiced or dazzle the uninitiated.’ I raised my eyes; we were in a small square room, its only furniture a few chairs, and an altar covered with black cloth, on which lay an illuminated missal, candlesticks containing large wax tapers, an hour glass, and a crucifix; there was, as my mother had said, nothing to awaken or excite, yet my attention was fixed by two massive gilt frames at the upper end of the room, the pictures which I supposed they contained, concealed by draperies of dark silk. My mother, mean-while, paced the apartment, as if collecting firmness for some painful effort, then, taking my hand, she seated me beside her, and minutely but rapidly detailed the particulars of Lady Katherine

Yet think not that I love these adopted children better than my Miriam—Heaven forbid! Go to your grandfather my dear child, go to La Motte; a few days will restore us all to harmony; I will accompany you. Do not reject your companions; at your return this trifling difference will be forgotten.'

"My mind was a chaos. Before this unhappy dispute of the morning, an excursion to Chamouni had been arranged; Philip, I knew, would regret my absence, and might resent my sudden departure, but, incapable of exertion or dissent, and perhaps glad to be relieved from the responsibility of deciding for myself, I consented to accompany my mother to La Motte.

"On our route we met my grandfather's carriage; it had been despatched for us, and anxiety concerning the cause of this summons, changed the course of our feelings. We found the Count 'mid all the bustle of preparation for a journey; he replied to my mother's hurried enquiries, 'I have told you Miriam, that a lawsuit, the result of which may be of infinite importance to your adopted children, has long rendered my presence in Paris desirable, if not necessary. How often does some accidental circumstance determine us to undertake on the instant that, the expediency of performing which has been haunting us for years, together with remorse for the indolence that

was succeeded by a stertor contraction of the gloomy brow, the meagre hands were clasped, but there was no corresponding upturned look of supplication; the countenance wore the character of deep and fixed despair.—I shuddered, and turned away.

“My mother dropped the curtain.—‘Miriam,’ she said, ‘mark me—you have heard me say that Lady Katharen accused herself alone, as the author of her calamitous fate, but your mother was her destroyer.—You may well look incredulous; this however is no heroic exaggeration, no high wrought and spontaneous effusion; it is a confession compelled by penitence, it is a harrowing conviction, confirmed by eighteen years’ reflection and remorse. A word would have saved my friend! From the mother of our faithful Annette, one of Count Sorenzo’s many victims, I heard a catalogue of that fiend’s enormities at which the ear would shrink. May their memory perish with his! The mind of Katharen was too pure, too elevated, ever to amalgamate with guilt; at my slightest hint of his lightest atrocity, she would have recoiled from the deep dissembler with disgust, but, satisfied with having, as I thought, snatched her from destruction, I neglected to apply the searching probe, and yielding to my selfish feelings, shrunk from witnessing the pang which my information might have inflicted. De-



rated a vast change; my enemies are dead, or no longer prevail, and the monarch who marred my fortune, and made my happiness, is no more.'

" 'But Miriam,' said my mother, 'requires the guidance of a parent; she is so unused to society, so timid—'

" 'And for those very reasons unfit to appear in the world under your auspices,' interrupted my grandfather. 'She will look to you for every thing, never learn to act for herself, and if deprived of your protection before she become a wife, will be unqualified to fill with ease her place in society. Madame de Monci is exactly the person to be her chaperon; she will ingraft polish on *mauvaise honte*, and dignity on timidity; she possesses too, woman's surest guide, discretion, woman's brightest ornament, piety. In youth her prudence was proverbial, her principles fixed. Fear nothing for Miriam; rather rejoice in the opportunity offered her of exchanging diffidence for decision, bashfulness for ease.'

" 'Appalled at the prospect of leaving the tranquil scenes of nature, so congenial to my feelings, for the turbulence of a city, the terrifying display of a court, I listened to this debate in trembling suspense, and when at length my mother's opposition was overcome by the Count's arguments, I acquiesced merely because I was accustomed

manner which cut me even more than her words; I tried to speak, but a feeling like suffocation prevented me.

“ ‘To-morrow,’ she continued, ‘I send Beatrice to the lady by whom her mother and I were educated; she is now abbess of a convent at Coire and——’

“ ‘I interrupted her wildly. ‘You will not kill me my mother, by such a determination; I accuse Beatrice of nothing; it was a jest; I was wrong to permit a retort, and Philip, pethaps, too impetuous; his affection for me ——’

“ ‘Thank heaven!’ interrupted my mother triumphantly.—‘Oh! Miriam, from what a weight of apprehension have you relieved me! I ask you not to love Beatrice, my child, I know you cannot. Nay Miriam, why that expressive gesture? I have seen you shrink from her embrace, and rush from the room rather than return it. You are generous my child; we cannot conquer, but we can curb our feelings.—Remember, she is an orphan; think of her trials, her misfortunes; let them plead for her with you, as they endear her to me; look at her, so young, so suffering, so patient! no repining, no discontent! Can you wonder at my affection? She reminds me of her own mother, she bears the name of mine, and I often think those sainted spirits smile on the sincerity of my repentance, and bless my efforts!

Yet think not that I love these adopted children better than my Miriam—Heaven forbid! Go to your grandfather my dear child, go to La Motte; a few days will restore us all to harmony; I will accompany you. Do not rejoin your companions; at your return this trifling difference will be forgotten.'

"My mind was a chaos. Before this unhappy dispute of the morning, an excursion to Chamouni had been arranged; Philip, I knew, would regret my absence, and might resent my sudden departure, but, incapable of exertion or dissent, and perhaps glad to be relieved from the responsibility of deciding for myself, I consented to accompany my mother to La Motte.

"On our route we met my grandfather's carriage; it had been despatched for us, and anxiety concerning the cause of this summons, changed the course of our feelings. We found the Count amid all the bustle of preparation for a journey; he replied to my mother's hurried inquiries, 'I have told you Miriam, that the result of which may be of infinite importance to your adopted children, has long rendered presence in Paris desirable, if not necessary; often does some accidental circumstance lead us to undertake on the instant that, of performing which has been hitherto years, together with remorse for the

prevented its execution. A letter from Madame de Monci, the only one of my early friends with whom I correspond, has roused me to action, or rather has overcome my daily encresing disinclination to quit, even for a short time, this beloved spot. She is about to marry her daughter to Monsieur de Courzel, the very person with whom I am at issue. 'Can I possibly feel satisfaction in this union,' she writes, 'if my son-in-law be at variance with my most valued friend? Come then Count, and let me mediate between you.'

" 'But such a journey,' said my mother anxiously, 'at your time of life.'

" 'It is meet that I suffer something for my indolence,' said my grandfather, smiling; 'besides I mean to request from you a nurse and a companion.—What say you Miriam Jermyn,' he continued, always delighting to address me by my double name, 'has the glitter of a court the same attraction for you, that at your age it had for your grandfather?'

" 'A court!' repeated my mother, apprehensively.

" 'Yes Miriam; Mademoiselle de Monci has been promised some situation at Versailles, and will remove to the palace on her marriage. Think you the granddaughter of the Count de Berville may not be presented? Forty years have ope-

Yet think not that I love these adopted children better than my Miriam—Heaven forbid! Go to your grandfather my dear child, go to La Motte; a few days will restore us all to harmony; I will accompany you. Do not reject your companions; at your return this trifling difference will be forgotten.'

"My mind was a chaos. Before this unhappy dispute of the morning, an excursion to Chantouni had been arranged; Philip, I knew, would regret my absence, and might resent my sudden departure, but, incapable of exertion or dissent, and perhaps glad to be relieved from the responsibility of deciding for myself, I consented to accompany my mother to La Motte.

"On our route we met my grandfather's carriage; it had been despatched for us, and anxiety concerning the cause of this summons, changed the course of our feelings. We found the Count amid all the bustle of preparation for a journey; he replied to my mother's hurried enquiries, 'I have told you Miriam, that a lawsuit, the result of which may be of infinite importance to your adopted children, has long rendered my presence in Paris desirable, if not necessary. How often does some accidental circumstance determine us to undertake on the instant that, the expediency of performing which has been haunting us for years, together with remorse for the indolence that

prevented its execution. A letter from Madame de Monci, the only one of my early friends with whom I correspond, has roused me to action, or rather has overcome my daily encresing disinclination to quit, even for a short time, this beloved spot. She is about to marry her daughter to Monsieur de Courzel, the very person with whom I am at issue. 'Can I possibly feel satisfaction in this union,' she writes, 'if my son-in-law be at variance with my most valued friend? Come then Count, and let me mediate between you.'

"'But such a journey,' said my mother anxiously, 'at your time of life.'

"'It is meet that I suffer something for my indolence,' said my grandfather, smiling; 'besides I mean to request from you a nurse and a companion.—What say you Miriam Jermyn,' he continued, always delighting to address me by my double name, 'has the glitter of a court the same attraction for you, that at your age it had for your grandfather?'

"'A court?' repeated my mother, apprehensively.

"'Yes Miriam; Mademoiselle de Monci has been promised some situation at Versailles, and will remove to the palace on her marriage. Think you the granddaughter of the Count de Berville may not be presented? Forty years have ope-

[illegible]

[REDACTED]

[illegible]

prevented its execution. A letter from Madame de Monci, the only one of my early friends with whom I correspond, has roused me to action, or rather has overcome my daily encroaching disinclination to quit, even for a short time, this beloved spot. She is about to marry her daughter to Monsieur de Courzel, the very person with whom I am at issue. 'Can I possibly feel satisfaction in this union,' she writes, 'if my son-in-law be at variance with my most valued friend? Come then Count, and let me mediate between you.'

"'But such a journey,' said my mother anxiously, 'at your time of life.'

"'It is meet that I suffer something for my indolence,' said my grandfather, smiling; 'besides I mean to request from you a nurse and a companion.—What say you Miriam Jermyn,' he continued, always delighting to address me by my double name, 'has the glitter of a court the same attraction for you, that at your age it had for your grandfather?'

"'A court?' repeated my mother, apprehensively.

Miriam; Mademoiselle de Monci has secured some situation at Versailles, and will reside in the palace on her marriage. Think of my daughter of the Count de Berville, who is now married? Forty years have opened



rated a vast change; my enemies are dead, or no longer prevail, and the monarch who marred my fortune, and made my happiness, is no more.'

" 'But Miriam,' said my mother, 'requires the guidance of a parent; she is so unused to society, so timid—'

" 'And for those very reasons unfit to appear in the world under your auspices,' interrupted my grandfather. 'She will look to you for every thing, never learn to act for herself, and if deprived of your protection before she become a wife, will be unqualified to fill with ease her place in society. Madame de Monci is exactly the person to be her chaperon; she will ingraft polish on *mauvaise honte*, and dignity on timidity; she possesses too, woman's surest guide, discretion, woman's brightest ornament, piety. In youth her prudence was proverbial, her principles fixed. Fear nothing for Miriam; rather rejoice in the opportunity offered her of exchanging diffidence for decision, bashfulness for ease.'

" Appalled at the prospect of leaving the tranquil scenes of nature, so congenial to my feelings, for the turbulence of a city, the terrifying display of a court, I listened to this debate in trembling suspense, and when at length my mother's opposition was overcome by the Count's arguments, I acquiesced merely because I was accustomed

to yield. My mother deferred apprising Philip of our arrangements until after my departure. The next day we bade her adieu, and commenced our tedious, though not uninteresting, journey.

## CHAPTER VIII.

U'a di si venne a me melancolia  
 E disse, " voglio un poco stare leco ;"  
 E parve a me che si morasse seco  
 Dolor ed ira per sua compagna.—DANTE.

" My mind is not sufficiently at ease to dwell on localities, or describe, otherwise than cursorily, the sensations of a girl of seventeen on first emerging from obscurity; it will be enough to say that I found no charm either in the capital or in the court, to compensate for the loss of that soul-felt enthusiasm which the sublimity of mountain scenery, the majesty of nature, inspires. Paris to me was noisy and disagreeable; the bustling exhilaration and tiresome frivolity of the inhabitants were harassing and disgusting; Versailles, of which I had heard and read inflated descriptions, appeared a heterogeneous mixture of magnificence and meanness, of taste and tinsel. Intrigue seemed the watchword of the gay and splendid circle into which I was introduced, whose presiding

divinity, the politic De Pompadour, worshipped by one party, reviled by the other, presented in her own person a melancholy proof that, in the estimation of the weak and giddy, earthly exaltation can consecrate, even crime.

"The greatest advantage I derived from this excursion was the friendship of the affectionate and amiable, though gay and thoughtless Madame de Courzel, whose mother accompanied us to Versailles, and by her judicious precepts and wise example, restrained her daughter's exuberant spirits, and taught me to distinguish between levity and liveliness, between confidence and self-possession. Still my heart yearned for Katheren, sighed for seclusion; from the glitter of pomp I turned fondly to my home, and the first sensation of delight I felt since I had quitted it, was caused by receiving letters from Philip and Katheren.

"*'You left us in displeasure, I fear, my dear Miriam,'* wrote the latter, *'in just displeasure, but could you witness the compunctious regret of Beatrice, even you, whom she treated so harshly, would forgive her. The horror which she feels at the recollection of her violence, has caused miraculous change in her character; she is become, even to Philip, mild and submissive; she has caught your air, your tone, your manner, the very character of your countenance. With what proud satisfaction do I look on her, now that she has*

acquired all that she wanted of perfection!—Can you wonder that she has fascinated Lord Blessingham? He arrived here the day after your departure, and, indeed Philip's zeal has not betrayed him into exaggeration. The Earl is noble, refined, accomplished, sensible and elegant; he does not worship Beatrice as poor Conwaye did, though his admiration I am persuaded is heartfelt; his attachment is that of a man exalted even more in mind than in rank, proudly and justly conscious of his own merits, and of the compliment he pays the woman he selects. Beatrice, accustomed to idolatry, was at first surprised by this rational mode of wooing, and would, if possible, have elicited a little romantic extravagance, but Lord Blessingham soon made her comprehend that even for her he could not adopt what he calls the fustian of sentimentalism, or the varnish of flattery. The day which I look forward to, joyfully yet fearfully, is to be fixed in two months; with us will be united a more humble, though perhaps not less happy pair, your faithful servants Annette and Sneider; the former has been persuaded by your mother to accompany Beatrice, the latter accepts (I suspect very unwillingly) the situation of confidential servant to Lord Blessingham. Both would prefer remaining at Clairville; Sneider in particular grumbles at giving up his dear young Mistress, as he calls you, but this is only to me, for your

mother is so idolised, that none would think of opposing her wishes openly.—Dear Lady Mornington! it is delightful to behold the benevolent joy which illumines her countenance. She drooped a little at your departure, and seemed nervous and anxious, but now she treads as lightly as the youngest, makes all arrangements with her usual ready judgment, and leaves us nothing to think of. Lord Blessingham looks on her with reverence and love; she calls him her son. They think and speak in perfect unison, for she is never weary of descanting on the merits of Beatrice, and I really believe Miriam, that it was from sympathy with her, his passion for my sister first took rise. I wish you had witnessed the triumphant delight which irradiated her fine countenance when Lord Blessingham declared himself the suitor of Beatrice.—Oh, never can we be sufficiently grateful to her and hers! my heart overflows with gratitude, my eyes fill with tears, when I think of her exalted worth. The Earl has a fine estate in Devonshire; Blessingham Castle, Philip tells me, is but a few miles from Mornington Hall.—Imagine our felicity, but do not think it can be perfect without you!—Return to us, dear Miriam, all sigh for you, but none so often as your Katheren.’

“ ‘Miriam,’ began Philip, ‘what have you done?—thrown away that which, when you know its value, you will bitterly bewail—remember, I

predict your repentance, your regret. To go without a hint, a word, a farewell! By what strange influence have you been ruled? By what specious arguments persuaded to destroy your own happiness, mine?—Yes mine, for do I not see Katheren in you, and you in Katheren? Could I love both so well, did not each so perfectly resemble the other?—But it is all over, my dearest hopes are annihilated, the day I so fondly anticipated will witness the sacrifice of my friend! Can I rejoice when I know that he must be miserable? Yes miserable; there is no medium for him; keenly susceptible, fastidious in his ideas of female delicacy, placing the perfection of woman, in modesty, meekness and refinement, imagine his disgust, his despair, when he discovers the real character of Beatrice! She has won him Miriam, won him under a mask, the mask I taught her to frame.—Exquisite dissembler!—consummate hypocrite!—how I hate, I loathe her! Wonder not at my rage, rather wonder that I do not tear from her the semblance of my sister, and name her what she is, proud, arrogant, imperious, designing!—perhaps worse, for who can pierce the scale of such a serpent? But I restrain myself, I curb my indignation, or vent it only in solitude—can I kill my Katheren?—destroy my mother?—incur perhaps her malediction?—My mother—good heaven, that such a woman should be so deceived! I sicken at

her praises of this scorpion! she dwells on her misfortunes, her resignation, her—. 'God help me! I shall grow mad. Miriam, you will tremble at this violence, but I cannot check it. To hear that impostor persuade my noble-minded friend that she had mistaken the sentiment which attached her to poor Conway! that he had never touched her heart!—his mendacities!—yes his murders, for think you I believe her version of that dreadful story, which she should never have lived to tell, or have breathed it only in a nursery?—Why did I not participate in the disappointment of poor Egerton? Because there was another whom I knew you would prefer, who I knew would prefer you to all——. Yes Miriam, I repeat what once I said with the hope, almost the certainty, of seeing you Blessingham's wife. You are suited to each other in such mutual perfection, that were it not my mother's, I could curse the hand which marred such happy concord.—Farewell Miriam; act in future as you please; Philip will never more interfere; you have given him up—Come or stay, follow the guidance of those who perhaps think of your happiness more than I do—Oh, my sister, my dear, dear sister!

"Such was my brother's letter. I lamented the violence of his ungovernable temper, but could not help admiring a disposition so affectionate, so generous, so entirely free from selfishness. I



smiled at the demolition of his brittle edifice—  
‘Poor Philip!’ thought I, ‘at least you have been spared the mortification of seeing Beatrice preferred before me.’ In truth the announcement of Lord Blessingham’s arrival had been succeeded by incidents so distressing, so varied and hurried, that my mind had never once reverted to the cause of the frightful scene in which the malignity of Beatrice had provoked Philip’s cutting retort; thus, the relation of the events which had taken place at Clairville during my absence, was read with a feeling more akin to surprise than to any other sensation. But all transient perplexities were banished by a delightful mandate from my grandfather to prepare for returning home.—Home!—the word was music!—His affairs at Paris had been satisfactorily settled, I should see him at Versailles in an hour or two, and should depart on the morrow.

“Notwithstanding my joy at this summons, I felt real regret when I bade adieu to the warm-hearted Madame de Courzel. She has proved her sincerity by never deserting her unfortunate friend. How my heart swelled as we passed the barrier which shut us from Switzerland, from Clairville, from La Motte! At length each feature in the landscape was recognised and saluted with that intensity of rapture which dear friends draw forth after separation. The mountains with their crystal

pyramids, the valley with its wood-built cottages, the silent lake, the rushing river, each dear, unconscious object received in turn its tearful tribute of affection. How joyfully I greeted the unassuming peasant, in her large straw hat, her plaited hair, her simple jacket with its snowy sleeves, health, innocence and activity combining to heighten the attraction of her artless costume. How I turned from the recollection of the powdered, painted, courtly coquette, which my imagination presented in disgusting contrast. The carriage stopped; our approach had not been announced; I quickly passed the well-known portico, and in a moment was in my mother's arms.

"Philip and Katheren, at sound of my voice, rushed into the room; Sneider and Annette waited in the doorway to welcome my return. Now caressed by Philip, now by my friend, now by my mother, I laughed and wept alternately, nor, until my grandfather entered to share in congratulation, had I leisure to look beyond the beloved circle by which I was surrounded. Beatrice, who stood in the window embrasure, advanced, with seeming eagerness, to salute me: she was followed by a stranger, introduced as the Earl of Blessingham—"If the mind correspond," thought I, "Philip is right."—"Miriam," said Beatrice, smiling, as in jest, "has so prodigious a passion for effect, that I

dared not advance before, fearing to spoil the *scena* which seemed purposely got up to please her.'

"Philip crimsoned at this invidious attack; he turned to the window: tears rushed to my eyes.—I was then the mark at which, even before strangers, the shaft of malice might be always directed? I glanced at Lord Blessingham: the harmony of his fine features was certainly disturbed—by what, I could not determine.

"My mother, who had been conversing apart with the Count, advanced.—'My dear Miriam,' she said, 'you have then resisted the allurements of rank and splendour, preferred a cottage to a coronet, your mother to—'

"'Every one!' I cried, impatiently interrupting her, and abashed at this allusion to a trifling circumstance which had occurred during my residence at Versailles.

"Philip turned towards me, 'Sister,' he said, 'you are prodigiously improved.'

"'Could Miriam be prodigiously improved?' said the partial Katheren.

"'Really friends,' exclaimed Beatrice, carelessly, 'you leave me nothing to remark, but Miriam knows me, I despise flattery.'

"Philip bit his lip; I feared an explosion; Lord Blessingham cast a startled glance at Beatrice.—Was I indeed the touchstone fated to elicit

the hidden traits of this extraordinary girl's character?

" 'You return without regret, my dear Miriam,' said Katheren, 'without a sigh you relinquish what my fancy images as surpassing even the magic splendour of Aladdin's palace.'

" 'Regret!' I exclaimed, 'Oh Katheren, this is my fairy land! That lake, reflecting heaven's own hue, these mountains bright with heaven's own ray, seem proudly conscious of their superiority to the most splendid monuments of man's construction; look at that scene and say—' I stopped, confounded by the derisive glance of Beatrice. Lord Blessingham saw my confusion, and the enquiring look he bent on my tormentor was answered by one of the most guileless innocence.—'Miriam is so graceful,' said Beatrice, 'her action is so suited to the word, that one might almost fancy she studied attitude.'

" 'Beatrice,' said Lord Blessingham, 'you have interrupted Miss Mornington.' He looked a request that I should proceed, but the transient enthusiasm which had caused my momentary confidence, had subsided; I could no longer describe pleasurable feelings; they had been crushed by derision: I retired with Katheren.

" It was natural that I should covet the esteem of my brother's friend, of the man in whose praise even my mother was loquacious, but could I flatter

myself with succeeding in that which Beatrice sought to prevent?—better at once yield to so powerful an opponent, and fly to La Motte. I soon however perceived I had erroneously estimated the influence of my persecutor; Lord Blessingham's mind could not be subjugated, even by the woman he preferred; his judgment, sound and perspicacious, governed his sentiments and directed his actions. The respect with which he at first treated me, gradually warmed into friendship, while I, delighted at having so completely miscalculated the power of my adversary, and looking on the Earl as the destined husband of another, lost in his society that timidity and restraint of which even the polished court of Louis had not divested me.

“ Philip, alternately pained and pleased, seemed perpetually excited to relieve his tumultuous feelings by some act of wild extravagance. I watched him anxiously; he beheld his wedding day approach with emotions of delight and despair so curiously blended, forming such unnatural combination, that it was no wonder I feared the effervescence which the ferment of such discordant ingredients might produce. Extreme, himself, in love or hate, he scarcely believed that I could regard Lord Blessingham merely as a brother, and doubted my assurance that I should rejoice in his union with Beatrice, if attended with happiness :

vainly I argued with him on the impropriety of suggestions which might awaken regrets incompatible with his sister's future peace; he protested the more vehemently that I had already destroyed my own happiness, and his friend's also; that Lord Blessingham was more dazzled than devoted, and that he had mistaken the nature of his feelings for Beatrice. 'Had *you* been his choice, Miriam,' Philip would exclaim; with passionate grief, 'we should have discovered how vain is his boast that, in him, reason governs sentiment; you would have seen him as extravagant an Orlando as myself. He will soon learn to distinguish between the false and the faithful, between art and nature; he has been hoodwinked, but his vision is clearing; I prophesy he will speedily discern the spots on his sun; the brilliancy of Beatrice has cast for awhile her mental deformity into shade, but you are the Pharos whose light throws into relief the distorted features of her character.'

"I would sometimes smile at, sometimes ridicule such predictions, which however, imperceptibly, led me to observe more closely the conduct of Lord Blessingham to Beatrice, and it was not long before I began to believe that, in some of his conclusions, Philip was right. Subterfuge might for awhile succeed, but could not for ever escape the detection of a mind so discriminating as the Earl's. The veil which artifice had flung

over ambition, envy and arrogance, could not long obscure his judgment. Beatrice, confiding in her power, grew incautious, or else her hatred of me, though an acquired sentiment, began by degrees to supersede her natural propensities, and even to subvert, at times, her deep dissimulation. Before my journey to Paris, considered merely as a child, unnoticed and, save in the case of Charles Egerton, unsought, I had never interfered with her ambitious speculations, nor, except in that instance, with the gratification of her vanity; but now, novelty and the partiality of my friends put me forth in irritating contact with one who, greedy of praise, could not spare even a poor scruple from her mighty tribute. Philip unfortunately knew where she was vulnerable, and stung, unrelentingly, by exaggerated eulogiums of his sister, as undeserved as unwished for; no entreaties could prevail on him to desist. Generous and self-denying to all besides, to Beatrice he was bitter and remorseless; the rancour of each to the other made their peculiar failings still more prominent: hatred was struck from the harsh collision. Philip became rude, and Beatrice (thinking her conquest certain) unguarded, nor was it long before Lord Blessingham looked beyond the surface that had dazzled his perception and found, beneath, a mental darkness, which, situated as he was, he scarcely dared to pierce.

“To deceive my mother was comparatively easy; her private devotions (now pursued with encreasing fervour,) her visits to La Motte, her arrangements for Philip, who, after his marriage, was to take immediate possession of his estates in England, often deprived us of her presence, which was always a check on my brother, but Lord Blessingham, our constant companion, it required more systematic cunning to dupe. Still Beatrice had the art to persuade her lover, or rather he was wilfully credulous, that the petulance she had betrayed since my arrival proceeded from jealousy. The most subtle imagination could not torture into anything beyond sisterly regard the frank cordiality of my conduct to Lord Blessingham, but she pretended to discover and deplore, an increasing partiality in him towards me, which she protested was the sole cause of her unkind sarcasms. The Earl shrunk from detecting the falsehood of her assertions; he had already penetrated too deeply, already repented his precipitancy, but he had gone too far to recede, and continued to treat Beatrice with the attention, though not with the tenderness, of a lover. This however I did not at the time comprehend.

“Thus were minds occupied, fears excited, suspicions checked, and arrangements for the double marriage rapidly proceeding, when we were invited to a splendid entertainment given by Ma-



dame Clusac—a chosen friend of Beatrice—in honor of her distinguished guest, Count Poniatowski, favourite of the Empress Catharine, whose powerful influence supported his pretensions to the crown of Poland. We were preparing for this gay festival, when my mother was attacked by slight indisposition. I refused to leave her, but the sisters went, under the protection of a lady who resided near Clairville. I had retired to rest long before the party returned, and was disturbed by Katheren, who hurriedly entered my chamber, and placing her lamp on the table, turned towards me a countenance full of such agitated and sorrowful expression, that I was rather relieved on hearing the cause of her emotion. Beatrice, as usual, had been the object of universal homage, notwithstanding her known engagement to Lord Blessingham. The Count had been captivated by her beauty, had selected her as his partner, and had paid her the most marked attentions, which Beatrice, intoxicated by the incense she had so long vainly languished for, not only received but encouraged. ‘There was,’ continued Katheren, ‘an expression of tranquil contempt, of composed but keen observation in the countenance of Lord Blessingham, which chilled me. I should have preferred irritation, reproach, neglect, anything to such cutting serenity; either he never loved or he has ceased to love my sister. Philip, too, has been ungene-

rous; he tried, but ineffectually, to conceal his triumph at the blameable conduct of Beatrice. I could not sleep Miriam, without seeing you; on your counsel I can always rely—Oh Miriam! if Beatrice should again ruin her own prospects by ——.’ The sweet girl stopped, unwilling, even before me, to speak harshly of her sister. ‘Would we had remained, like you, with Lady Mornington! my heart smote me as I entered the magnificent saloon; I thought of you, in a sick or lonely chamber, and could not reckon on pleasure from the evening, though I little foresaw such mortification. How could Beatrice be pleased at this fulsome attention? How could the Count offer it? for I heard Madame de Clusac mention to him her engagement. Can his design be to supplant Lord Blessingham?’

“I could scarcely help smiling at the simplicity and sisterly vanity, which saw no obstacle to the union of Beatrice with the embryo king, save her promise to another. I tranquillized Katheren by talking of love’s reprisals, and prophesied an encrease of affection from this temporary estrangement.

“The next morning our little party met in the music-room. Lord Blessingham was serious and reserved, Philip grave, and Katheren melancholy. The gravity of Philip indeed seemed assumed, to cover some turbulent emotion; his countenance

was tortured into solemnity, while the workings of his real feelings would at times appear in a smile, which he instantly tried to hide beneath a most ludicrous scowl.

“ ‘ Philip,’ said Katherine reproachfully, ‘ you remind me of Petrarch’s *frettola, Di rider, ho gran voglia.*’

“ The ‘ *rider,*’ which had played on Philip’s cheek was instantly succeeded by most petrifying collapse of brow ; I laughed ; Lord Blessingham raised his eyes from a book on which he had appeared intent, looked at me, and repeated

‘ Non sa, com’ amor sana, e come ancide ;  
Chi non sa, come dolce ellè sospira,  
E come dolce parla, e dolce ride.’

“ I blushed, and Beatrice sighed ; she was leaning on her harp, in a negligent attitude, striking at intervals a few plaintive chords, which seemed to harmonise with her feelings. The ‘ *dolce sospiro*’ reached my ear ; I looked towards her, and my attention was fixed ; the bending form, the touchingly penitent countenance, the tearful eye, more eloquent than when more brilliant, the dark glossy ringlets, falling forward as if to hide her sorrow, half concealing and yet heightening her loveliness. ‘ Surely,’ thought I, ‘ she is irresistible !’ It proved so ; Lord Blessingham threw aside his book, and approached her. I smiled, and

exchanged expressive glances with Katherine. Philip groaned; and now looked grave without effort.

"That we might not interfere with the whispered conversation which ensued between Beatrice and her lover, I proposed a walk, but at this moment the carriage of Madame de Clusac stopped at the door. She came to request we would pass the day at Emmenthal, her country seat. Katherine and I immediately declined the invitation, but Beatrice stood blushing and irresolute, looking at Lord Blessingham; whose cold dignity of manner awed her into silence. Just then my mother entered, and learning the purport of Madame de Clusac's visit, with our determination, she turned to Beatrice, and said, 'You will not disappoint your friend, my love; I will send the carriage for you early.' Beatrice still wore an air of indecision, and appeared to yield with reluctance; she ventured timidly to second the invitation of Madame de Clusac to Lord Blessingham, which he politely but firmly declined, then, bidding us adieu, with well feigned irresolution and wavering step, she left us.

"In the evening a note arrived from Madame de Clusac, requesting Lady Mornington would forgive her detaining Beatrice a few days at Emmenthal, as various parties of pleasure had been planned, which she hoped all her friends at

Clairville would join. 'Katheren is too delicate,' said my mother, 'for such incessant exertion, Miriam I know will not leave her, but you will go Edward?' addressing the Earl. His steady negative rather surprised her, but ascribing his refusal to anything save indifference, she soon forgot, in the important and solemn preparation for the approaching ceremony, her transient discomposure.

## CHAPTER IX.

To the friend, when 'tis spoken, it sadd'neth the heart,  
To the lover, when whisper'd, 'tis followed by wo,  
If from sister, or brother, or parent we part,  
Still, still it but heralds the tears that will flow.  
'Tis a word too that often is said with a smile,  
Tho' of sighs the precursor, of pleasure the knell;  
To our country when breath'd, scarcely hope can beguile,  
To the Exile—'tis gloom—'tis despair—'tis farewell.

“How eventful to me was the interval between the departure and return of Beatrice! Philip, incautious and sanguine, had every day, every hour, new cause of triumph to impart. He had found out that the Count was at Emmenthal, and made no secret of his discovery.—‘Beatrice will herself break this abhorred engagement, Miriam,’ he would exclaim, ‘and I shall again look to the future with unmixed delight!—Think you that Blessingham is a man to be slighted and fondled, rejected and resumed at pleasure!—He will grant her the petty gratification of returning his pledge—for surely after this she will be eager to set him free, lest he himself should rive the chain, and

Clairville would join. 'Katheren is too delicate,' said my mother, 'for such incessant exertion, Miriam I know will not leave her, but you will go Edward?' addressing the Earl. His steady negative rather surprised her, but ascribing his refusal to anything save indifference, she soon forgot, in the important and solemn preparation for the approaching ceremony, her transient discomposure.

## CHAPTER IX.

To the friend, when 'tis spoken, it sadd'neth the heart,  
To the lover, when whisper'd, 'tis followed by wo,  
If from sister, or brother, or parent we part,  
Still, still it but heralds the tears that will flow.  
'Tis a word too that often is said with a smile,  
Tho' of sighs the precursor, of pleasure the knell;  
To our country when breath'd, scarcely hope can beguile,  
To the Exile—'tis gloom—'tis despair—'tis farewell.

“How eventful to me was the interval between the departure and return of Beatrice! Philip, incautious and sanguine, had every day, every hour, new cause of triumph to impart. He had found out that the Count was at Emmenthal, and made no secret of his discovery.—‘Beatrice will herself break this abhorred engagement, Miriam,’ he would exclaim, ‘and I shall again look to the future with unmixed delight!—Think you that Blessingham is a man to be slighted and fondled, rejected and resumed at pleasure!—He will grant her the petty gratification of returning his pledge—for surely after this she will be eager to set him free, lest he himself should rive the chain, and



thus transfer to her, the humbling pity which follows the forsaken—at all events the engagement must be cancelled. This is no surmise Miriam; I speak from high and sure authority; but you may attribute to mere suspicion, if you please, my conception that Blessingham adores you,—nay, do not look so frightened, truly there is something appalling in becoming the idol of such a votary! Call me henceforth, Oracle; he has long preferred you, and now, love breathes in every stolen glance.'

"Thus would Philip rave, until some harrowing idea of his mother's and Katherine's disappointment would intervene and dim his joyful mood.—Alas! these rash suggestions, which were at first listened to with incredulity and indifference, were gradually heard with a strange mixture of hope and horror.

"The absence of Beatrice was protracted beyond all reasonable excuse. Philip's bubbles grew substantial, and mocked my efforts to disperse them. Lord Blessingham's constraint was at an end; he seemed every moment on the point of passing those bounds which his entanglement still placed between us. My mother, terrified by the rapid decline of my dear grandfather, was unobtrusively of minor matters, postponed the completion of Philip's settlements, and left us for La Motte. The mere hint of my accompanying her

threw Philip into agonies, but my mother relieved him, by suggesting the propriety of my remaining with Katheren.

"At length Beatrice returned—the Count attended her, and, although he never came to Clairville, he contrived to accompany us in all our rambles, ever on the watch, ever devoted to Beatrice. Lord Blessingham, far from resenting his assiduities, met him with cordial frankness. Our party seemed in such perfect harmony, that at last I gave ear to what I had at first considered Katheren's visionary conception, that Beatrice had really captivated this seductive candidate for royalty.—Alas! my delusive dream soon fled.

"My grandfather rallied; my mother returned to Clairville. The day after her arrival, we met as usual in the music-room: Lord Blessingham was absent: a servant entered and presented a letter to Beatrice; she tore it open, changed color, but instantly conquering her emotion, hummed the air of the song she had been singing, and darted out of the room.

"'From Madame de Clusac,' said Katheren, 'I recognised the handwriting.'

"'Not another invitation I hope,' said my mother, 'your sister must not again leave this house as Beatrice Sorense.'

"My mind was in tumult; I glanced at Philip;

he looked scornfully incredulous. Beatrice returned—‘Count Poniatowski has been recalled,’ said she, carelessly, ‘Madame de Clusac transmits his adieux—faithless man!—broken his word!—promised to be the first to offer homage to the Countess of Blessingham.’

“Terrified at the throbbing of my temples, I rose to quit the room, but, unable to support myself, staggered and resumed my seat. Philip bent forward to hide me from observation—‘Miriam,’ said he, ‘the sun is bright, the lake sparkles, the tippet grebe will soon depart, let us look at it once more; Katheren is lost in Mozart, Beatrice in Andalusian castles, my mother in parchments.—Will you walk?’ He drew me from the room—‘Go to the pine grove, Miriam, and await me there; I will seek Lord Blessingham.’ Mechanically I obeyed him, but had not time either to analyse or subdue my emotion before he joined me—‘Miriam,’ said he, ‘why this perturbation? For you, at least, thank heaven! I fear nothing. Blessingham is with Beatrice; this farce will soon cease.’—He tried to smile—‘I cannot rejoice,’ he exclaimed, ‘I cannot—the downfall of my mother’s hopes, of Katheren’s—Come Miriam, they will need your support; come, and if you *can* feign, I conjure you to seem indifferent. Would to heaven I had left you in ignorance of Blessingham’s real sentiments!’

“ ‘Philip,’ I cried, wildly, ‘you have not betrayed me to him?’

“ ‘No, on my life, on my honor, by neither word nor hint have I compromised the delicacy of my sister.’

“ We had reached the house; he led me, passive and almost unconscious, to the music-room; my mother was so occupied that she scarcely noticed our entrance. Katheren, with perturbed countenance, advanced towards me—‘ Lord Blessingham has sent to request a private interview with Beatrice,’ she whispered; ‘ the request from a lover is not singular, yet I tremble.’

“ Philip opened a portfolio; I could not speak, I could not move, I stood like one bewildered in a tangled maze, from which no outlet is visible. This terrible suspension of faculty and motion was soon to experience frightful revolution. The door was thrown open, Beatrice, pale and dishevelled, rushed into the room, and threw herself at my mother’s feet; her hands were raised beseechingly; my mother started—‘ Beatrice, my child, why that posture, that look of terror? what has happened?’

“ ‘ Lady Mornington, oh Lady Mornington! pity me, save me!’ gasped Beatrice, ‘ my heart will burst,—oh pity me; Lord Blessingham abandons me!’

“ ‘ Impossible,’ cried my mother, ‘ you rave my child—some causeless pique.—Where is Edward?’

Where is the Earl? Philip, I would speak with your friend.'

" 'Oh no, no,' cried Beatrice, starting up and frantically seizing my brother's arm, 'nothing can avail; nothing; Lord Blessingham loves another.'

" 'Who?' demanded my mother.

" 'Miriam!' faltered Beatrice.

" 'It is not true, it is not true,' cried my mother vehemently.

" 'Beatrice,' said Philip, advancing, 'too long, have your arts been practised with impunity, too long has my mother been duped by—' He stopped, for Katheren had fainted; they flew to her; I alone, like the denounced, stood apart, stunned and speechless. Katheren slowly revived—'I will not live, I cannot live,' she murmured, 'to see my sister insulted, forsaken.'

" 'We will die together Katheren,' cried Beatrice, flinging her arms round her sister.

" 'Sainted spirit! are my children to become the destroyers of thine?' ejaculated my mother,—  
 'Miriam,' she continued, with increasing vehemence, 'your countenance tells a fearful tale—speak; am I to infer that my daughter has conceived the slightest sentiment incompatible with the indifference which a delicate woman should feel for the destined husband of another?—A simple negative is all I require; truth needs no asseveration.'

“As well might she have addressed the marble Muse against which I leaned for support! She bent towards me, her voice sank to a whisper—  
 “Speak Miriam, my brain whirls, will you kill your mother?” I was silent—“Miriam, does Lord Blessingham love you?”—I spoke not. She pressed her forehead, blood gushed from her mouth; she fell. My stupefaction fled; I rushed towards her, she waved her hand with repulsive, almost abhorrent gesture; accepting the support of Philip and the sisters; she was borne from the room.—But one withering pang of my after life can be compared with the sting of that moment!

“In the corridor I met Sneider, hurrying for the physician—‘Where is Lord Blessingham?’ I demanded; he pointed to the salon; I threw open the door, and stood before him. He leaned upon a table, his head buried in his folded arms—  
 ‘Miriam! Miss Mornington! Good heavens, why this agitation?’

“‘My lord,’ I said, putting aside the chair he offered me, ‘this is no time for ceremony; I come on an errand of life or death; my mother—’

“‘Do you wish me to go to her; Miriam do not torture me. What has occurred?’

“‘Can you ask my lord?’ I exclaimed, the exigence of the moment inspiring me with confidence; ‘you cancel your engagement with Beatrice—you break my mother’s heart!’

“ ‘And is it possible that Lady Mornington, that you, Miriam, can require its fulfilment?’ he demanded.

“ ‘Was it she, was it I who formed that engagement, Lord Blessingham?’

“ ‘And was I not willing,’ he cried, indignantly, ‘to pay the penalty of my rash precipitance, even by the sacrifice of hope and happiness? Would I not have stood with Beatrice at the altar, and redeemed my pledge by the forfeiture of what is dearer still, my truth! Who broke the bond to me so binding, though so baneful? Beatrice!—And why? Because her vain ambition had erected a more dazzling structure, which, when she found it frail, she coolly quitted for the more stable, though less brilliant edifice. And Miriam comes to plead for heartless levity, for ——.’

“ ‘Hush my lord!’ I said, with forced calmness, ‘distort not actions, pervert not terms; you would subtilize and refine until woman’s nature could not bear your test. Beatrice loves you; she could not feign the burst of agony which your breach of faith called forth; had you beheld her prostrate, you would have snatched her to your heart; obduracy should find no place in a mind exalted as yours; a trial of her power, perhaps erroneous, indiscretion induced by vanity, pardonable in one so beautiful, is all you have to forgive. My lord she ’ offered.’

“ ‘ Miriam, this is mere sophistry ; it is you that are deceived ; remember, ‘ indiscretion sometimes serves us well when our deep plots do fail.’ Look through the mist with which mistaken pity now obscures your judgment ; argue not against the possibility of perfection in woman, while you belie your own assertion.’

“ ‘ The sophistry is your’s, my lord ; look to yourself ; beware lest any motive, yet untold, should influence your conduct ; examine well.’

“ He looked at me fixedly, then paced the room with hurried steps. ‘ Miss Mornington,’ he cried at length, ‘ you have prevailed. By no other argument could you have won your cause. Now hear the answer to your searching question.’ I shrank from his frenzied energy. ‘ Miriam,’ he continued, grasping my hand, ‘ you have provoked this disclosure. I love you with a passion so intense that I tremble at the dominion it has acquired : your question has engendered doubt.—Is my reason indeed subjugated ? have I been guilty of injustice ?—Yet let me reflect ; let me be convinced ; give me time.’

“ ‘ And is it Lord Blessingham, whose high sense of honor has exalted him into a standard for conduct, is it Lord Blessingham who wishes to protract the reparation due to the injured ?’

“ He struck his forehead and exclaimed with vehemence—‘ At least in one thing Beatrice has



not deceived me; you could not thus have pleaded against yourself, against the most powerful passion of the human mind.—You have not more than mortal heroism; Beatrice was sincere when she protested your affections were hurried with Lord Conwaye.’

“ I started at the gross deceit; contempt was in my countenance, indignation in my heart; Had I then annihilated my dearest hopes for this calumniator? A word, and Beatrice was lost!—denial flew to my lips—I thought of my mother, and repressed it. Could the wretch on the rack feel more than I did as I coldly said—‘ The confession of my sentiments for poor Conwaye can be of no consequence to you my lord.’ ”

“ ‘ Miss Mornington, that look of scorn is all sufficient; I confess the slavery of principle to passion; neither justice nor honor should bind me to Beatrice, at the risk of your enduring a twentieth part of the torture I now suffer.—If yield—here is my hand; I cannot give it to another.—You—may lead me where you will.’ ”

“ For a moment I hesitated; my energy was chilled, Lord Blessingham’s look of despair was changed to one of hope—Philip’s voice sounded in the corridor, ‘ Is the physician arrived?—Sneider’s hoarser tones were heard in passionate grief, ‘ My mistress, my dear mistress!’ I grasped the hand which still lay in mine, rushed along the

passage, and entered my mother's chamber. She lay extended, pale and suffering; unclosed her eyes, saw us advance with hands linked, and 'shuddering' waved us from her. I knelt, 'Mother,' said I, in a firm tone, 'Lord Blessingham weds Beatrice to-morrow.' She took a small cross which lay on the pillow; it had been Lady Katheren's; she kissed it, presented it to the Earl, he pressed it to his lips—the silent but solemn compact was complete, irrevocable.

"I had sacrificed the man I loved—myself—but I had saved my mother—may Heaven balance the good and evil!

"They were married.—What anguish is recorded in that short sentence! My mother's illness forbade festivity; I refused to leave her except for one moment to embrace my poor Philip and the weeping Katheren, to suffer the cold salute of Beatrice, to receive the agonised farewell of the Earl. 'Mid the gloom of the darkened chamber I thought of the bridal party, of the distant country they were journeying to, of all the joys the future promised them. I contrasted their happy prospects with the frozen desert of my future pilgrimage; no sunbeam glimmered through the gloom of despondency, I had almost said of despair, but the bitterness of that feeling was reserved for after years. My mother sought not to penetrate my heart; satisfied with my conduct, she forbore to

scrutinise its motives, and never suspected the full extent of my sacrifice.

“ She was restored, but not to former health ; wasted and feeble, the shadow of her who was once the master-spirit of our movements. I lost my selfish inertness, roused by her decline, and, with exertion of which I thought my crushed heart incapable, prepared for removing to La Motte.

“ How beautiful is protracted age when the soul, still unsubdued, gives earnest of its future immortality, when the mental faculties, still vigorous, are exerted to ensure the possession of that felicity for which the lingering spirit pants ! Thus beautiful was the decay of my dear grandfather. —At length we knelt at his death-bed ; his frame was withered and exhausted, but the hope of Heaven had lighted up his sunken eye, even with youthful fire ; he grasped the emblem of his faith, and extended it to Heaven.—‘ Through this Beatrice,’ he said, ‘ through this, alone, I hope to reach thee !’ The hand fell motionless, the eye was fixed, the hue of death stole upon his features, but the spirit, ere it departed, had impressed the countenance with the smile of security and peace. We wept, but our sorrow was selfish, we could not mourn for *him*. His last communication to me was singular. One morning I watched beside his pillow during the absence of my mother.—‘ Miriam,’

he said, 'the marriage of Beatrice Sorenzo, and her separation from you, have dispersed a cloud which would have damped the joy of my dying hour; I dared not show your mother a letter I received from the Earl of Dunane; the shock might have proved overpowering; I can allow for the acrimony of a spirit soured, not subdued, of pride humbled, not controlled; the Earl's letter speaks his character; there is at least no concealment, and however deep his coloring, deadly his hatred, however revolting to mercy and religion, still the unprejudiced must conclude that the provocation which induced such bitterness could not have been trivial; his hints at the character and conduct of Beatrice were dark, mysterious and alarming; her hypocrisy ——.' Here the entrance of my mother interrupted the conversation, and the subject was never resumed.

"After my grandfather's death I sought for the letter, intending to destroy it, but my search was fruitless, and alas! I have every reason to conclude it fell into my mother's hands, and hastened her dissolution. She declined daily; the serenity of her fine features had given place to haggard anxiety, the energy of her mind to debility.—No longer actively and healthfully employed, in charitable or literary pursuits, she would sit for hours in gloomy reverie, then, looking at me with piteous expression, she would utter half sentences and

hasten to the oratory. Those noble principles which once urged her incessantly to practical usefulness, were imperceptible through the cloud of apathy, or were buried in the darkness of superstition. Prayer, confession, penance, alone engrossed her; all other occupation she thought irksome or sinful; her mind was gone. Even our foreign letters, once watched for with intense anxiety, now scarcely excited momentary attention; yet Katheren's communications were cheering; she spoke of Beatrice with rapture, of her affection for Lord Blessingham, her affability, her munificence: the poor blessed, the rich admired her; Blessingham Castle was the focus of splendour, science and wit. The sisters met daily, their happiness could not be increased. Philip's confidential letters to me did not discredit his wife's assurances. 'The conduct of the Countess was,' he said, 'irreproachable; she was the magnet of the multitude:'—but with his characteristic distrust of Beatrice he added,—'fortunately for my friend, his wife is now surrounded by those in whose eyes rank and beauty are no apologies for levity; Beatrice is wary; she will seek another scene before she drops the veil; her wishes point to Italy, but my friend is firm.—'My child,' he says, 'shall be born in England.'—'I too, Miriam, hope soon to become a parent.'

"I checked a sigh.—'Thus,' said I, 'is the

past forgotten, the future proudly anticipated; to me, alone, all is blank, desolate!"—I turned from such bitter thoughts to Heaven and my mother; she was roused from lethargy by my last intelligence, forced her mind to dwell on sublunary matters, and spoke calmly and decidedly of her approaching dissolution.—'Miriam, my child, my dear, dear child,' she exclaimed, with all her former force of expression, 'restrain those feelings, they embitter my remorse, they agonise me; if I have been deceived ——.'

"'No, my mother, no,' cried I, impatiently interrupting an explanation the effect of which, to her, might have been fatal; 'you have erred in nothing, you have formed two happy unions, all is right.' Her searching look found me firm.—To save my mother I could dissemble.

"The next morning I was summoned to the oratory. I had never entered it since the eventful day which preceded that fatal journey to Paris. My mother was seated in an easy chair, which her feebleness rendered necessary; she held a letter.—'Miriam,' said she, 'I had sent for my confessor, but the good man is seriously indisposed, and his place, to-day, must be supplied by a stranger who is staying with our venerable Haller: he is, I understand, a Spanish Jesuit, at least he was sent from Spain on a mission to the Bishop of Coire, and is now about to proceed to the relief of his

persecuted brethren in Paris. I should have preferred waiting for the good Haller, but we must not permit death to overtake us unprepared. Do not tremble Miriam; I have no apprehension that there is urgent necessity for this; on the contrary, my feelings of, to-day, almost cheat me into the hope of recovery: for your sake I would yet linger here; still, imperative duties must not be neglected. Bring me the cabinet which stands in the recess of my chamber; it contains letters and papers relating to the Mornington estates, which I would deposit in a place of greater safety.' I obeyed her commands, and arranged, under her direction, various manuscripts and memoranda in a small iron box of singular construction, which lay at her feet. 'Now Miriam, listen to my last request, my last injunction, with composure.'

"I knelt, and burying my face in her robe, tried to check the tumult of my grief.

" 'I address my good, my pious, generous child; I have no doubt of her obedience. You will not part with La Motte or Clairville, Miriam; both are yours, for Egerton will never accept the latter. Ah! my child, had I but left you the wife of that disinterested man! Miriam, romantic love is not necessary in wedded life; congeniality of mind is all sufficient; my union with your father was most happy, and yet no stronger feeling than esteem led me to form it. Should Charles remain unchanged

my child, remember this. If circumstances permit your residing with Philip, if Lord Blessingham should quit Devonshire—.' She hesitated, then rapidly proceeded: 'Let my old domestics, Miriam, reside at La Motte and Clairville; you may one day return to Switzerland; mean-while, let this chamber be hallowed, and should Philip have a daughter educated in, or a convert to her mother's faith, let Clairville be hers; lead her hither, shew her those pictures, and relate to her the story of both her grandmothers.—May she escape the misfortunes of the one, the errors of the other!—And now heaven bless my child, my best, my dearest!'

"A gentle knock announced the priest; I arose from my knees as he entered; his face was almost enveloped in his cowl, yet, as I reverentially bent to him, an eye gleamed on me, the well remembered expression of which, connected as it is with the harrowing events that followed, even now appals me.

"Absorbed by the melancholy reflections which my mother's address had awakened, I wandered along the corridor, and, for the first time since our return from La Motte, unconsciously entered the salon at its further end, which was exactly opposite my mother's chamber. It was the room in which I had first heard of, last seen, Lord Blessingham, the scene of the fatal quarrel that had provoked the dreadful denunciation of Beatrice,



which had been followed by Philip's appeal to my mother and my unfortunate removal. I approached the mirror to which my brother had so tauntingly pointed the attention of Beatrice, and throwing my arms on a table beneath it, pressed my throbbing temples against my burning hands, and gave way, for the first time, to a burst of agony, violent in proportion to its long suppression. My reason subdued, my senses disordered by grief, became the slaves of fancy, which revelled in its power and conjured up images fantastic and fearful. I was again in the oratory, kneeling before my mother, who pointed to the pictures, repeating her solemn bequest; the priest stood near, unveiled the haggard semblance of Lady Katherine, which, endued with sudden life, started from its frame and beckoned to my mother. A faint shriek disturbed this 'unreal mockery;' I raised my head, gazed at the mirror, and recoiled from the reflection of my ghastly countenance. I listened breathlessly; the door of the room in which I sat was open, it was opposite the mirror which reflected the range of the corridor, bounded by my mother's chamber. All was still. Had I slept, or had imagination, abusing her usurped dominion, mocked me with a waking vision, startled me with ideal sound? I sat suspended or still entranced, my eyes riveted on features which now I saw not, so great was my mental abstraction,

At length my attention was fixed by sounds, certainly real, and, with reviving consciousness I again looked into the mirror: the door of my mother's chamber was slowly opened, the tall, thin, shrouded figure of the monk appeared; he advanced along the passage with solemn pace, stopped, and seemed to survey me intently. I turned abruptly: he approached—I bent my knee. In accents deep and impressive, in tones which if heard again would come familiar to my ear, he said, marking on my brow the symbol of atonement, ‘So young, so guileless, yet so firm!—shall erring man dare deprecate thy heresy?—bless thee! fare thee well.’—He turned again.—‘Daughter, feeling must have vent, religion will then resume her power; seek not thy parent till she summon thee.’

“He was gone; the next moment I heard his measured step issue from the portico. I flew to the window; his dark form glided through the trees which skirted the lake, he descended a flight of steps, and disappeared.

“Dinner was announced, but, observant of the priest's injunction, I postponed the unwished for meal, and paced the room, endeavouring to subdue emotion, or at least to regulate it by reason. For the first time I missed my poor Annette; she had been my attendant from childhood, and would have

proved some solace to my loneliness, but she, too, was gone with Beatrice.

“No sound came from my mother’s chamber, twilight was sinking on the earth, gloom and superstition advanced together, mocking my fruitless efforts to be firm. Unnerved, appalled, I shrank, and turned from the reflection of my own figure as I passed the mirror; even the ticking of my watch seemed unusually loud, breaking the silence with irritating and monotonous sound. The hour approached at which our physician generally attended; I unclosed the casement; a thick haze veiled each familiar object, which, seen through the dim perspective, appeared preternaturally grotesque and gigantic; the ‘viewless wind’ seemed fraught with horrid whispers; I shuddered, closed the casement, and cast an eager look along the corridor; the door of my mother’s room stood open as the priest had left it; she was still, then, in the oratory. I gazed till sight grew stronger, stealing its encrease of power from all the other senses—a shadowy shape seemed to flit across the distant chamber; I sprang forward—’twas but fancy making palpable ‘airy nothings.’—I approached the oratory; all was in profound repose, I knocked gently; no voice replied; cautiously unclosing the door, I entered; the pictures were unveiled, the large chair fronted them, its back

towards me; I stole along with noiseless step; all was indistinct, 'mid the gloom of a November evening: my mother reclined, she seemed to sleep; I softly placed a chair beside her, and laid my head near hers. As if under the influence of some strange fascination, my eyes were fixed on the wan and wasted semblance of Lady Katheren, through the dim twilight, horribly distinct. I closed my lids, but could not shut out the ghastly phantom; it seemed to approach, chilling the ambient air with freezing touch; I shrunk from the fearful contact, and nestled closer to my mother—a horrid surmise struck my brain—superstition fled, suspense was madness, with desperate effort I grasped her hand—it was stiff and cold—she was dead!

“Memory eludes my efforts to relate what followed—dreams and realities, visions and events float in confused and shadowy assemblage on my mind; even now I cannot separate the material from the immaterial, or record the incidents of the subsequent month. One harrowing thought alone haunted me—that my mother's death had been precipitated, unnatural. Reason gave way before the shocking surmise, nor until this wild suggestion of a distempered fancy was banished by argument and evidence, did my intellect recover its original tone.

“Philip was the first person of whose presence

I became conscious; the situation of Katheren prevented her accompanying him. He had left his wife, when most she needed his support, to seek his sister; he had watched me, untired, through my tedious malady, hailed my restoration with rapture, and quieted the commotion of my mind by the kindest soothings. It was long, however, before I could speak of my mother with composure, or think of the awful suddenness of her death, without shuddering. Surger, our good physician, prescribed change of scene, and, with feelings saddened even to mournfulness, I prepared to leave my birth-place. Who can describe the fond lingerings, the keen regrets, the bitter adieus of the exile? Oh Switzerland! oh my country! How true is it, that the untravelled heart turns to thee more fondly from absence, clings to the cliff which fancy images, and melts or maddens at thy simple music.

## CHAPTER X.

Oh! long, long years of care too oft 'twill take,  
To heal those wounds which one short hour may make!

“ENGLAND thou art too proud; too prosperous to excite in the hearts of thy children that deep interest, that devoted patriotism, which the hardy sons of poverty and toil feel for the land enfranchised by the rude valor of their forefathers. Who can compare the wrongs which roused to resentment a Tell and a Tyler?

“Our simple Swiss cottage and romantic chateau were not the less regretted when contrasted with Mornington Hall, its spacious and splendid apartments, its luxuriant park, its boundless prospect; and I turned with a feeling of awe, almost of dismay, from the distant view of that dark sea whose perils I had so lately encountered.

“The unchanged Katheren, with even rapturous welcome, flew to embrace me.

“ Many events had occurred during my illness ; Beatrice had become a mother, and Philip’s disappointment was more than compensated by the recovery of his wife, whose life had been despaired of. My generous brother had carefully concealed from me Katheren’s danger ; until we arrived in Devonshire I knew not the full extent of the sacrifice he had made. The infant son of the Earl, by his request, had been named, Mornington. Lord and Lady Blessingham had left England for Italy ; this, at least, was some relief.

“ During the period of mourning we lived, of course, secluded, but I could not with my sables lay aside my grief. Sorrow to me was holy, society irksome ; always timid, I was now weak, and, shrinking from the remonstrances of Philip, the entreaties of Katheren, I shunned the world, and gave myself up to pining retrospection. This seclusion and reserve afterwards operated fatally against me.

“ Philip, at last, became importunate for my introduction to his English friends, and, incapable of continued resistance, I promised compliance, but before the festivities consequent to my submission commenced at the hall, Philip himself sank into dejection, and avoiding even his wife and sister, shut himself into the library, and spent whole days in solitude. Our gaieties were suspended, and again I had leisure to ruminate and to

regret, but my brother's uncharacteristic and unaccountable depression now employed my thoughts. If I questioned him, I was answered by a sad, sometimes by a reproachful look; to Katheren he was equally reserved, and we both fearfully marked the arrival of foreign letters, the sure forerunners of his gloomy abstraction. Katheren would have been in alarm for her sister, had she not continued to receive from Beatrice the most vivid descriptions of the splendour, with the not very usual concomitants of such magnificence, the freedom and variety, of her life at Florence. Her boy was well, the darling of Annette, who relieved her of all anxiety respecting him. Her palace, and her villa on the banks of the Arno, were equally enchanting, she had nothing to wish for, nothing to regret, but the society of her dear Katheren.

“ Tortured by vague apprehensions, I earnestly watched my brother. One morning his foreign letters were read with irrepressible perturbation. In his expressive countenance were portrayed, alternately, grief, perplexity and indignation. He left the room; I followed to the library; the door was locked, I supplicated admission—‘Miriam,’ he said, permitting my entrance, ‘you will not remain in happy ignorance.’

“ ‘Happy, Philip, while you suffer?’

“ ‘I would have spared you Miriam, and yet soon, perhaps, concealment will be impossible.’



“ ‘Brother,’ I cried, beseechingly, ‘suspense is sometimes more terrible than even terrible certainty.’

“ ‘Take then my agony for your suspense,’ said Philip, vehemently; ‘Lord Blessingham has been mortally wounded in a duel caused by his wife’s imprudence.’

“ I was stunned and fell; they carried me, insensible, to my chamber. ‘Mid all my sorrows I had been soothed by the hope that my sacrifice was not in vain; that I had ensured the reformation of Beatrice, by uniting her to such a man, and that, in time, Lord Blessingham might cease to regret his compulsory marriage; but, now, the misery of my former feelings was increased by keen and unavailing compunction—I revived to theaching consciousness of superadded wretchedness, the cause of which at first was indistinct, but memory’s touch soon made it fearfully prominent. Philip and Katheren hung over me; the former whispered—‘Miriam, for my sake be cautious; disclosure may be fatal to my wife, let us await Sneider’s next communication.’

“ Days passed away; I had not firmness to enquire into particulars; Philip’s looks met mine with melancholy sympathy. At last a letter came; it was from Florence; we were sitting in the library, and Katheren, fortunately, was absent. Three times poor Philip tried to break the seal;

at length 'twas done; the paper was unfolded,—a gleam of joy brightened my brother's countenance —‘The ball has been extracted; he lives!’

“I sank on my knees; never was more heart-felt gratitude breathed to heaven! Philip's present joy was impetuous in proportion to his former despair; he would go to Italy, he would compel his friend to sue for a divorce.

“‘A divorce!’ I ejaculated; ‘is this breach irreparable? Has Beatrice been so very imprudent; is her honor——’

“‘Honor!’ he repeated, contemptuously interrupting me, ‘honor! Has she modesty, principle, delicacy? Did she not forfeit her title to all these when she accepted the unwilling hand of my noble friend?—Honor!—what is it in such a creature?—the bubble of circumstance, the cloak with which convenient caution covers indiscretion. Is such a woman to be countenanced because she keeps her honor?—and who can reckon even on that, in a country where profligacy revels under the name of frivolity, where the insulted husband escapes from the ridicule of the grinning community only by succumbing to the despicable *servente*—I cannot unite to that degrading term the incongruous adjunct; ‘Cavalier’ conveys to my mind an idea of chivalry, glorious and immortal; none but the trafficking noblesse of Florence could connect epithets so discordant. But Lady Blessing-

ham is fastidious; it is Acton, the admiral of Tuscany, the Emperor's favorite, whom she has exalted to that honorable post; it is he, who might have been, for aught her ladyship cared, the privileged murderer of my noble friend. Miriam you grow pale, you think me mad, but did you know, as I do, the marvellous tissue of that woman's arts, had you read the injured Earl's letters, and those of Sneider, you would wonder that I still permit her correspondence with my wife. Yet she boasts the suffrage of the multitude, and vaunts the observance of that poor discretion which preserves her fame.—Oh miracle of consummate art! She has done nothing forsooth in which she is not borne out by custom, by example, by the noblest dames of Tuscany! Fancy the wound inflicted on the proud feelings of an Englishman when he sees his wife the companion of women whose licensed libertinism forms shameful contrast to the servitude of their grovelling lords, when he meets the sneer that taunts his just resentment, or the injurious pity that attends on jealousy. For his child's sake, Blessingham has hitherto been lenient; he has entreated, conjured, menaced; his remonstrances are met with the silence of contempt, his importunity with ridicule, his menaces with reproaches. Her stinging retort is his passion for you—Miriam, why would you force this fatal confidence—yes his inex-

tinguishable passion for you! Self accusation destroys his firmness; conscious of this absorbing sentiment for another, of his more than indifference for her, he suspects the feelings that urge him to be resolute, and his insidious tyrant, marking well this single blemish in his noble nature, bends him to her will, him, once inexorably determined, because unerringly just. Sneider tells me there is incredible change in body and mind; fluctuating, feeble, unsettled, irritable,—what a fall!

“I had listened to this torrent-like declamation with desperate resolution, with that fixed yet doubting attention which prevented its interruption, with an ear shrinking from, yet drinking in the poison that chilled the blood—he paced the room—‘Is Lord Blessingham safe?’ I faltered. ‘Is the danger past?’

“Philip again burst forth—‘Safe! and of what avail? does he bear a charmed existence? can he withstand at once the privileged paramour, and the pensioned assassin?—Twice before has his life been aimed at, though not by the licensed butcher who purchases indemnity for blood by bartering truth, by hiding the revengeful under the indignant spirit—Safe in such a country! with a woman who conceals her murderous rescript beneath the pantomimic mantle of hypocrisy.’

“‘Philip, Philip, oh moderate this violence;

Beatrice is not a monster ; such atrocity is not in human nature.'

" ' Human !' he cried, ' and do you indeed believe her nature partakes of humanity ?—No Miriam,' he continued, with encreasing vehemence, ' be assured she is some secret instrument of retributive justice, permitted for a space to triumph, till she perform her mission.—Think of her exquisite cunning ; she feigns ignorance of the cause for which the life of my friend was nearly forfeited to that bubble opinion, and while all condemn the intemperate husband, all applaud the immaculate wife. Read my poor friend's letters, Miriam, read Sneider's, be convinced.—But for that faithful creature I should have remained in ignorance of the glaring enormities of Beatrice. If one spark of former energy remain in Blessingham, he will resent the falsehood which has snatched odium from the aggressor, and fixed it on the injured—He must leave her—he shall !'

" I had not courage for another enquiry ; indeed further information was unnecessary. Lord Blessingham's misery was irremediable, and my consequent remorse almost insupportable. My grief found no solace in passionate exclamation, it was deep and silent, it preyed on my mind and frame, reducing both even to childish imbecility. Poor Philip, seeing its intensity, tried to retrace the particulars of his shocking detail, in order to

soften their horrors, but the blow was struck, its effect was stunning, it prepared the way for the one great error of my after life, by subduing the little remaining spirit and confidence which the consciousness of innocence, the hope of having sacrificed self alone, had hitherto bestowed.

“I must hasten to the catastrophe of my unhappy story, else the transient firmness caught from despair may subside, and I may again sink into the abject and uncomplaining victim.

“Katheren viewed me with looks half fearful, half reproachful; she saw that something was concealed, and to withstand the silent remonstrance of her sweet countenance was an effort of fortitude to which affection alone made me equal. She held existence by so slight a tenure that nothing but the most unwearied watchfulness preserved her.—How could so delicate, so sensitive a creature bear the rude shock which had almost overwhelmed me? Sea air seemed uncongenial to her constitution, and Philip, always cautious in whatever concerned her, spoke of returning for a time to Switzerland.—Switzerland! the sound caused a momentary suffusion, a throb of pleasure, which, in our present uncertainty, I chided as unfeeling. My brother saw my emotion, and decided on removal in the ensuing month. Katheren was all joy and excitement; she should be near her sister—perhaps join her in Italy; she

was sure Philip would not deny her this dearest gratification. I shuddered in contemplating what might be the effect of hopes doomed to disappointment. My brother expressed his determination to urge with all his rhetoric a separation between the Earl and Countess, and had solemnly vowed that his wife, though he might permit her to correspond with, yet should never be contaminated by the society of her sister. It was necessary to prepare Katheren in some measure for what he considered must be the denouement of this fatal marriage.

“As the time for our departure approached, decision became imperative, and yet we postponed the communication, from day to day. Katheren was accustomed, by reason of her delicate health, to retire early, and I generally conversed with Philip for a considerable time after she left us. One evening we were seated in the library, discussing, as usual, the painful topic of disclosure: our conversation insensibly reverted to the alarming suspension of our Tuscan letters. Philip endeavoured to dispel my apprehensions, and, with forced gaiety, began to portray the joyful greeting we should receive from our dependants at La Motte and Clairville. I thought of my mother's grave, and wept, while memory faithfully pictured the fond welcome I had once received, when all was bright, save one small but sombre spot, which,

deepening as it spread, gradually gloomed my radiant horoscope. Sounds unusual at such an hour roused me. Philip, who had also sunk into silence, started and looked from the window which opened into the park, but external objects were made doubly obscure by the lamps within; a carriage, however, certainly and rapidly approached; it stopped; a servant threw open the library door, and the next moment my brother supported the emaciated form of Lord Blessingham.

“ I gazed, rooted to the earth. ‘ Miriam !’ said the Earl, disengaging himself from Philip’s embrace, and slowly approaching me. I held out my hand, and faltered a welcome. There was a wildness in his eye which awfully contrasted with his solemn manner and measured step : almost terrified, I shrank from his touch.—Had the grave given up its dead ? Was it spirit or substance that stood before me ?—the shadowy stooping figure, the bloodless countenance—was this the princely being from whom I had parted but two years before ? I was unable to subdue my emotion, and ejaculated ‘ Is it possible ?—Is this Lord Blessingham ?’

“ ‘ Even so,’ said he, with a bitter smile, ‘ in mind and body equally degraded.’

“ ‘ No, no, no,’ cried Philip, impetuously, ‘ my life upon your rectitude !’

“ ‘ A bold risk for such a stake, Philip,’ said



Lord Blessingham, deliberately; 'you would pay the forfeit of your rashness; I am a murderer!'

" 'In your own defence,' cried Philip, grasping his friend.

" Lord Blessingham disengaged himself, folded his arms, forced his features into 'frightful composure, drew a deep respiration, and coolly and emphatically uttered, 'I have murdered my wife!'

" Sudden conviction of his insanity alone preserved my reason; Philip feebly ejaculated, 'My poor Katheren!' covered his face, and sank into a chair, while I, still unbelieving, approached the Earl, and looked tremblingly in his countenance for a refutation of his horrid avowal.

" 'Miriam,' he said, passively submitting to my guidance, as I conducted him to a seat, 'you have made me a wretch.'

" 'Not so, my lord,' cried I, soothingly; 'you are agitated, your emotion will soon subside; you are with friends who venerate you, who will not receive even Lord Blessingham's testimony against himself.'

" 'And is not this proof?' he cried, wildly extending both his hands, 'what! can you, young, innocent, a woman, look thus on blood, the blood of Beatrice, your own, your fatal gift? Thus, thus have I dealt with it! Miriam, listen to me and judge, be upright, be impartial.—Was it love

for you and hate for her?—Was it guilt, error, chance or madness, revenge, resentment or despair that slew her?—for she is dead, surely dead, and I am her destroyer.’ He started from his seat, rushed from the room, sprang into his carriage, and ere we had recovered from our stupefaction, he was gone.

“But he had left a faithful chronicler of his dismal story. Sneider entered; his countenance confirmed the horrid confession. His narrative was brief, but conclusive: the Earl, wound up to madness by the conduct of his wife, determined, though scarcely convalescent, to quit Italy with his child; every thing was prepared; they were to embark at Lerici for Nice, on board a Felucca, which Sneider, overjoyed at the commission, had been despatched to prepare; the Earl and his suite were to follow; relays were ordered, all was in readiness. Sneider, surprised at the nonappearance of Lord Blessingham, returned from Lerici, and met the Earl at Pisa; he was in a state of pitiable indecision. Annette informed her husband that a terrible scene had passed between the Earl and Countess; she, Annette, had been sitting in the apartment of the latter, with the little Mornington when the Earl came to make a last appeal to his wife. ‘Beatrice,’ he said, ‘I ask you not to think of me; such request might well cause your scornful smile; but for your own sake, for

your child's I supplicate; you must now choose between that boy, and this hateful country;—be persuaded Beatrice; renounce ties frivolous and degrading, for the natural and the honorable; let not your child mourn for his mother. The Countess, with an expression of the most irritating contempt, tauntingly exclaimed: 'Why, my lord, omit your own sufferings in this sentimental effusion? Why not dilate on the miseries of the forsaken and adoring husband? ... My lord, I break no ties, I falsify no vow, I rend no heart. Say on your honor that you feel for me the affection of a husband, and I promise you the obedience of a wife—you cannot; you would doom me to a life of chilling indifference, of withering apathy, to linger through years of wedded wretchedness, in that sad country, physically and morally cold; which congeals the warm affections of the heart, and fetters with freezing formality the innocent freedoms of social life—I will not submit. (Take that boy—tear from me my child, dear to me, though he bear a hated name, and Florence shall ring with my wrongs, and you shall feel my revenge.' The Earl, who at one time seemed to waver, was now firm; he took the boy in his arms, quitted the apartment, followed by Annette, and threw himself into the carriage which awaited him. Camilla, the Countess's confidential woman, pursued them, protesting her lady was alarm-

ingly ill, and requested to see the Earl, but the servants had their orders, and the carriage drove off.

"Before they arrived at Pisa the Earl had relapsed into indecision, fluctuating between flight and forgiveness; he was no sooner joined by Sneider than he decided on returning to Florence, and making what he called a final effort to save the mother of his child. Accompanied only by this faithful servant, who now gave up all hope of his master's stability, he reached the palace; the domestics informed him that the Countess was at her villa, whither she had been attended by the admiral. Lord Blessingham asked for his pistols; they were brought; Sneider remonstrated, but the Earl protested he meant to make use of them, only, in self defence; it was necessary he should be guarded, as more than one attempt had been made upon his life.

"They left the carriage at a short distance, and reached the villa by a private and subterranean pathway, through a grotto that led to a grated door of which the Earl had a key. The Countess's page met them in the vestibule, and would have flown to apprise his lady, but the Earl, giving the boy to Sneider's charge, and ordering both to await his summons, left them. Scarcely ten minutes had elapsed when the report of a double pistol shot was heard; Sneider rushed forward,

guided by the terrified page; they entered the boudoir of the Countess; her bleeding body was supported by Acton; the Earl, with the bewildered look of insanity, stood gazing on his wife, holding one of the pistols; the other lay at the feet of the admiral, who vehemently besought Lord Blessingham to fly. 'The Countess is dead,' he exclaimed, with passionate grief, 'your life is forfeited, I myself must appear as your accuser for the murder of this injured woman.'

"The Earl made no reply; with eyes starting from their sockets, he still gazed on his wife; deep breathing alone betrayed that he lived."

"'Murder!'" said Snider, indignantly—he took the pistol from his master's nerveless hand, then snatched up the other—"both have been discharged. Sir, he must be a wise man who could determine by which ball Lady Blessingham was struck."

"'Yourself shall prove,' said the admiral, contemptuously, 'that both weapons were brought hither by Lord Blessingham.'"

"The Countess's women, alarmed by the page, now rushed in, and with loud laments bore the body of their mistress to her chamber. Snider, terrified at what might be the consequence of delay, took advantage of the confusion, conducted his passive, unconscious master to the carriage, and urging the postillions to their utmost speed,

they stepped only to change horses until they reached Lerici. The master of the *Felucca* was well-known to Sneider; the Earl was committed to this man's charge; recommending diligence and promptitude to Annette, our trusty servant saw them embark, and returned to Florence, to make such arrangements as his judgment might suggest. He avoided the city, and proceeded towards nightfall to the villa, where he was met by Camilla, who informed him, weeping bitterly, that her mistress's friends had decided the body should be embalmed and lie in state until her relatives in England should be informed of her death; that Lady Mornington had been written to, and every arrangement made; that all ranks reprobated Lord Blessingham, whose life, were it even spared by the civil power, would, she was convinced, if he should return, fall a sacrifice to the fury of the populace; that the Countess was universally bewailed as a martyr, and her lord reviled as a jealous, tyrannical heretic.

"Sneider, satisfied that he had saved his master, and that every thing had been arranged suitably to the emergency, instantly departed, and, using all possible despatch, rejoined the Earl's suite at Nice. Annette informed her husband that Lord Blessingham had wept bitterly on seeing his child, and seemed roused to recollection,

but having enquired for Sneider, and been informed of his return to Florence, he had relapsed into gloomy silence, yet seemed collected and rational, and that on their disembarking at Nice he had given orders for proceeding through France to England.

“ When the Earl saw Sneider, he fixed on him a look of keen enquiry, heard his communication in profound silence, made not the slightest remark, and, afterwards, seemed insensible to every thing until they arrived in Devonshire, when, ordering one of the carriages to convey Annette and her charge to the castle, he, with Sneider, proceeded to the hall.

“ To my brother’s enquiries concerning the further particulars of the fatal event, Sneider replied that he was entirely ignorant of them, that Lord Blessingham, even in his most incoherent exclamations, had never cast the slightest reflection on the Countess; that his whole conduct disproved his having ever intended to injure his wife; nevertheless he, Sneider, could not answer for what a sudden impulse of fury might have led his lordship to commit.

“ We prolonged our melancholy conference without coming to any conclusion; all seemed dark and harrowing. At length Sneider took a sorrowful leave, and my brother, summoning the servants, commanded them to conceal the arrival

of the Earl from Lady Mornington; and to deliver into his hands any letters addressed to her; it appearing to him essential to defer the disclosure of her sister's death until our arrival at Clairville. He then left me to the misery of loneliness.—Oh the horrors of that long, long night!

“The next morning Philip rode early to the castle; I counted the moments of his absence. Katherine was all bustle and exhilaration; she could talk of, think of nothing but her journey, which was to commence the following day. She left me, to bid adieu to some friends in the neighbourhood, for as I had neither friend nor acquaintance, it was not necessary I should accompany her in these visits of ceremony.

“Philip returned; his communication increased my distress. No entreaty could prevail on Lord Blessingham to disclose the cause of his second quarrel with Acton; my brother could only gather from unconnected sentences, that the Earl had defied the Admiral, that as they stood fronting and levelling their pistols at each other, the Countess rushed forward, caught Acton's arm, and at that moment received the contents of Lord Blessingham's pistol, Acton at the same time discharging his without effect. The Earl saw his wife fall, heard the exclamation ‘she is dead,’ and was conscious of nothing further until Annette put the child into his arms on board the Felucca.



Philip added that Lord Blessingham's physician had given the most alarming opinion of his patient, whose life, he said, would be hazarded by even a day's delay in Devonshire. There was faint hope in a speedy voyage to Lisbon.

" 'Is the Earl composed?—resigned?' I faltered.

" 'The composure of sullen agony,' cried Philip; 'the resignation of despair—Miriam, can we do nothing to save him?'

" Sneider at that moment requested admission; the honest, attached creature entered, with a mournful countenance.—'I come to bid you farewell, my dear young mistress,' he said, 'I never called another by that name without regret; my late, unhappy lady—'

" 'Unfortunate, misguided woman,' cried Philip, 'I can now think of her without detestation.'

" 'We leave the castle to-morrow,' resumed Sneider, 'one of us will never return.'—He burst into tears.—'My poor master will die in a foreign land, without a friend, save an humble one.—Ah Miss Mornington! he deserved better.'

" 'His fate is not so certain,' said Philip, angrily.—Sneider shook his head.—'He shall not die!' cried my impetuous brother. The faithful Swiss advanced, and in a whisper, which nothing but intense anxiety could have overheard, said,—

‘Then, Sir Philip, my young mistress must save him.’

“He left us abruptly; we gazed at each other, fearful of interpreting the meaning of words in which, alas, there was little ambiguity, and both fell into profound meditation.

“Katheren, occupied with her own happy plans, perceived not our abstraction, or imputed its cause to that change which engrossed herself. Fatigued from her morning’s exertions, she left us early to our mournful discussion. Philip expatiated on the Earl’s innocence and the malice of his defamers. ‘Pitiful and bigotted as they are,’ he exclaimed, ‘they cannot torture accident into design; if Acton have the soul of a man, he will clear my friend. I will leave Katheren at Clairville, proceed to Italy, see our ambassador, all shall be sifted and Blessingham’s honor substantiated. I fear not for his fame, but I tremble for his intellects; the slightest reference to that horrid catastrophe troubles his reason; derangement may be the consequence of solitary rumination. Would to heaven I could accompany him to Lisbon!’ He looked at his watch. ‘The time approaches which I appointed for our interview; the Earl will soon be here.’

“I rose to retire. ‘Is this kind Miriam? Is it feeling? Would you refuse my poor friend a last

Philip added that Lord Blessingham's physician had given the most alarming opinion of his patient, whose life, he said, would be hazarded by even a day's delay in Devonshire. There was faint hope in a speedy voyage to Lisbon.

" ' Is the Earl composed?—resigned? ' I faltered.

" ' The composure of sullen agony,' cried Philip; ' the resignation of despair—Miriam, can we do nothing to save him? '

" Sneider at that moment requested admission; the honest, attached creature entered, with a mournful countenance.—' I come to bid you farewell, my dear young mistress,' he said, ' I never called another by that name without regret; my late, unhappy lady—'

" ' Unfortunate, misguided woman,' cried Philip, ' I can now think of her without detestation.'

" ' We leave the castle to-morrow,' resumed Sneider, ' one of us will never return.'—He burst into tears.—' My poor master will die in a foreign land, without a friend, save an humble one.—Ah Miss Mornington! he deserved better.'

" ' His fate is not so certain,' said Philip, angrily.—Sneider shook his head.—' He shall not die!' cried my impetuous brother. The faithful Swiss advanced, and in a whisper, which nothing but intense anxiety could have overheard, said,—

‘Then, Sir Philip, my young mistress must save him.’

“He left us abruptly; we gazed at each other, fearful of interpreting the meaning of words in which, alas, there was little ambiguity, and both fell into profound meditation.

“Katheren, occupied with her own happy plans, perceived not our abstraction, or imputed its cause to that change which engrossed herself. Fatigued from her morning’s exertions, she left us early to our mournful discussion. Philip expatiated on the Earl’s innocence and the malice of his defamers. ‘Pitiful and bigotted as they are,’ he exclaimed, ‘they cannot torture accident into design; if Acton have the soul of a man, he will clear my friend. I will leave Katheren at Clairville, proceed to Italy, see our ambassador, all shall be sifted and Blessingham’s honor substantiated. I fear not for his fame, but I tremble for his intellects; the slightest reference to that horrid catastrophe troubles his reason; derangement may be the consequence of solitary rumination. Would to heaven I could accompany him to Lisbon!’ He looked at his watch. ‘The time approaches which I appointed for our interview; the Earl will soon be here.’

“I rose to retire. ‘Is this kind Miriam? Is it feeling? Would you refuse my poor friend a last

Philip added that Lord Blessingham's physician had given the most alarming opinion of his patient, whose life, he said, would be hazarded by even a day's delay in Devonshire. There was faint hope in a speedy voyage to Lisbon.

" ' Is the Earl composed?—resigned? ' I faltered.

" ' The composure of sullen agony,' cried Philip; ' the resignation of despair—Miriam, can we do nothing to save him? '

" Sneider at that moment requested admission; the honest, attached creature entered, with a mournful countenance.—' I come to bid you farewell, my dear young mistress,' he said, ' I never called another by that name without regret; my late, unhappy lady—'

" ' Unfortunate, misguided woman,' cried Philip, ' I can now think of her without detestation.'

" ' We leave the castle to-morrow,' resumed Sneider, ' one of us will never return.'—He burst into tears.—' My poor master will die in a foreign land, without a friend, save an humble one.—Ah Miss Mornington! he deserved better.'

" ' His fate is not so certain,' said Philip, angrily.—Sneider shook his head.—' He shall not die!' cried my impetuous brother. The faithful Swiss advanced, and in a whisper, which nothing but intense anxiety could have overheard, said,—

‘Then, Sir Philip, my young mistress must save him.’

“He left us abruptly; we gazed at each other, fearful of interpreting the meaning of words in which, alas, there was little ambiguity, and both fell into profound meditation.

“Katheren, occupied with her own happy plans, perceived not our abstraction, or imputed its cause to that change which engrossed herself. Fatigued from her morning’s exertions, she left us early to our mournful discussion. Philip expatiated on the Earl’s innocence and the malice of his defamers. ‘Pitiful and bigotted as they are,’ he exclaimed, ‘they cannot torture accident into design; if Acton have the soul of a man, he will clear my friend. I will leave Katheren at Clairville, proceed to Italy, see our ambassador, all shall be sifted and Blessingham’s honor substantiated. I fear not for his fame, but I tremble for his intellects; the slightest reference to that horrid catastrophe troubles his reason; derangement may be the consequence of solitary rumination. Would to heaven I could accompany him to Lisbon!’ He looked at his watch. ‘The time approaches which I appointed for our interview; the Earl will soon be here.’

“I rose to retire. ‘Is this kind Miriam? Is it feeling? Would you refuse my poor friend a last

Philip added that Lord Blessingham's physician had given the most alarming opinion of his patient, whose life, he said, would be hazarded by even a day's delay in Devonshire. There was faint hope in a speedy voyage to Lisbon.

" 'Is the Earl composed?—resigned?' I faltered.

" 'The composure of sullen agony,' cried Philip; 'the resignation of despair—Miriam, can we do nothing to save him?'

" 'Sneider at that moment requested admission; the honest, attached creature entered, with a mournful countenance.—'I come to bid you farewell, my dear young mistress,' he said, 'I never called another by that name without regret; my late, unhappy lady—'

" 'Unfortunate, misguided woman,' cried Philip, 'I can now think of her without detestation.'

" 'We leave the castle to-morrow,' resumed Sneider, 'one of us will never return.'—He burst into tears.—'My poor master will die in a foreign land, without a friend, save an humble one.—Ah Miss Mornington! he deserved better.'

" 'His fate is not so certain,' said Philip, angrily.—Sneider shook his head.—'He shall not die!' cried my impetuous brother. The faithful Swiss advanced, and in a whisper, which nothing but intense anxiety could have overheard, said,—

‘Then, Sir Philip, my young mistress must save him.’

“He left us abruptly; we gazed at each other, fearful of interpreting the meaning of words in which, alas, there was little ambiguity, and both fell into profound meditation.

“Katheren, occupied with her own happy plans, perceived not our abstraction, or imputed its cause to that change which engrossed herself. Fatigued from her morning’s exertions, she left us early to our mournful discussion. Philip expatiated on the Earl’s innocence and the malice of his defamers. ‘Pitiful and bigotted as they are,’ he exclaimed, ‘they cannot torture accident into design; if Acton have the soul of a man, he will clear my friend. I will leave Katheren at Clairville, proceed to Italy, see our ambassador, all shall be sifted and Blessingham’s honor substantiated. I fear not for his fame, but I tremble for his intellects; the slightest reference to that horrid catastrophe troubles his reason; derangement may be the consequence of solitary rumination. Would to heaven I could accompany him to Lisbon!’ He looked at his watch. ‘The time approaches which I appointed for our interview; the Earl will soon be here.’

“I rose to retire. ‘Is this kind Miriam? Is it feeling? Would you refuse my poor friend a last



farewell? I would not reproach you, but remember —

“ ‘ Philip,’ I cried, interrupting him, ‘ try not to encrease my remorse; rather tremble at its probable effect! You may one day regret the length to which reparation may lead me.’ ”

“ ‘ Your heart then does dictate what I scarcely ventured to suggest?’ said Philip eagerly. I had no time for reply; Lord Blessingham was announced.

“ ‘ Philip—Miriam,’ he said, ‘ I come to bid you a long farewell; to-morrow you leave this country for Switzerland, and I—for whithersoever chance may lead—I care not. You will be the guardian of my poor boy, Philip; he will be brought to you when I am dead; extend to him your steady attachment. And you, Miriam, will not behold him with the scorn you once expressed for his unhappy parent; you will remember that at your bidding I married that —.’ He stopped, drops of agony stood on his forehead.—‘ No, poor victim, no, I will not revile thee!—’twas barbarous,’ he cried vehemently, ‘ ’twas barbarous to kill thee; a deed of treachery.’ ”

“ My brother seized his arm; he saw that some powerful charm was necessary to break the chain of thought which was again subduing reason.— ‘ Lord Blessingham, this refinement of feeling is

romantic, ridiculous; would you visit accident with the punishment of guilt? This hallucination is as monstrous as that which induces the belief that my sister scorns you—she pities you, she —.’ I caught his hand.

“ ‘It matters not,’ said the Earl, ‘contempt or compassion, both equally degrading, both equally deserved.’

“ ‘Blessingham, you provoke reproof,’ said Philip; ‘why thus cherish subtleties which aggravate your misfortunes, which will neutralize the efforts of your friends; I go to Italy; if those mountebanks dare asperse your honor, I fling their calumnies back upon the slanderers.’

“ ‘You will clear the fame of the dead,’ said Lord Blessingham, ‘I feel it here Philip; I shall never return, never profit by your generous devotion to an ill fated man; farewell my only friend, my noble hearted advocate.’

“ ‘Philip hid his face and wept: my emotion was now too powerful for controul; I sobbed convulsively. ‘Be not afraid I should misinterpret your grief Miriam,’ continued the Earl, approaching me. My brother rushed forward, seized my hand, and placing it in his, ejaculated—‘She loves you Edward; take her, take her with you, and Heaven bless you both!’

“ ‘Lord Blessingham recoiled, he dropped my

hand, 'Mornington,' he said, 'beware! I was once deceived ——.'

" 'Never by me,' cried Philip, vehemently, 'Miriam never loved another.'

" 'Miss Mornington,' exclaimed the Earl, wildly, 'speak; save or destroy me; disappointment of the hope I now feel must be followed by death!—Do you consent?'

" 'Yes, yes,' I cried, terrified at the expression of his countenance, 'I confirm all that Philip has said; I do consent.'

" 'We were married privately the next morning, and immediately after the ceremony, attended only by Sneider and Annette, proceeded to Plymouth and embarked for Lisbon. Should you be inclined to censure with severity this rash, precipitate step, Doctor Elwin, peruse again my narrative of the scenes which immediately preceded that momentous event; pity the conflict between remorse and delicacy; forgive a decision induced by the conviction that I had destroyed the peace of the being I loved best, and should this pleading fail to propitiate, remember I was only nineteen, and an orphan!

" 'I had knelt to Philip for permission to see Katheren, but he was firm.—'Your agitation would betray every thing,' said he; 'leave the explanation to me; her mind must be prepared gradually for such unforeseen events; in a few

pursued him. Beatrice was dead—that woman was not his wife.

“I cannot dwell on a scene which tortures even in recollection.—A trying, heart-rending interval succeeded; our physician pronounced that the Earl’s intellect would be restored, himself never; that returning reason would prove the forerunner of death. This judgement was verified; three days after his attack, he conversed calmly and rationally with Philip, executed his will, addressed to me again the language of devoted attachment. I shed no tear, I breathed no sigh; Philip was astonished at my fortitude—Ah! he knew not with what energy true affection can inspire weak and timid woman. I listened to the Earl with the composure of serenity; for worlds I would not have added to the pang of separation by a murmur, by even a stifled moan. I heard his last injunction, his last solemn behest, received his last sigh, and then—

“I awoke from a long mental slumber: a bright sun gilded my apartment, darting its rays on many a well-known object, which, decked by some friendly hand, seemed gay and glittering. I tried to smile in unison with the gladsome scene, and wondered that I could not; my features seemed sternly rigid, and would not relax into cheerfulness; an oppressive weight baffled my efforts to hail with pleasure the scene of my child-

## CHAPTER XI.

Let me wring your heart, for so I shall,  
If it be made of penetrable stuff.—SHAKESPEARE.

"AFTER a tedious voyage we landed at Lisbon. The Earl, now clinging to life with a tenacity proportioned to his former indifference, was entirely submissive to his medical advisers. Engrossed by him and the little Mornington, I had no leisure for reflection; the nurse of one, the companion and soother of the other, time flew rapidly—such halcyon days I dare not dwell on!

"Three months elapsed, and yet no letter from Philip. This did not alarm us; he was occupied in clearing from obloquy the character of his friend, and would write when all was arranged,—besides his letters might have miscarried. We were not anxious to emerge from our obscurity; titles, grandeur, what were they, compared with the bliss of domestic life, bright with affection, harmony and confidence?

"But the Earl's malady still lurked; alarming symptoms began to reappear; 'further South' was the advice of our physicians, and, with palpitating eagerness, I prepared for proceeding to Madeira. After a second protracted voyage we arrived at that mountain island; the change for a time proved beneficial, but again the short cough, quickened pulse and languid air awakened apprehension. Catching the faintest hope, the slightest hint, I now prepared for a voyage to Nice. The Earl shuddered when I imparted this last advice.—Nice! so near the scene of those harrowing events which had destroyed his health and impaired his intellect.—He would not go.—I wept, and he consented. It was necessary however to be circumspect; Nice was under the government of Sardinia, and I knew not how far the Austrian authorities in Tuscany, incited by the Earl's enemies, might influence an Italian potentate; but many months had elapsed, the ferment must have subsided, Philip was zealous and active, and although I received no answers to my repeated letters, this delay I ascribed, solely, to our unforeseen movements. Nice too, was comparatively at a trifling distance from Geneva; once there, nothing could interrupt our communication with Switzerland. We determined to go.

"Our voyages were fated to be protracted; we were two months in reaching Nice, having

long detained at Gibraltar by contrary winds. In that interval I became a mother; my boy was named Edward, after his father.

“ We took a small house in the neighbourhood of Nice, near the hill of Montalban, determined to live in complete seclusion until we should hear from Philip, to whom I instantly wrote. Too much engrossed by Lord Blessingham's illness to be mindful of more distant evils, I heeded not the lapse of time; satisfied that I was near my native country, I would turn towards the point where it lay, and picture my dear Katheren, visiting and relieving our old dependents, surrounded by her former friends, resigned to the loss of her sister, and looking anxiously forward to the return of the poor wanderer.

“ One afternoon, while the Earl reposed in an inner chamber, I seated myself near the window of our little apartment, with my infant and Mornington; to prevent the latter disturbing his father, I amused him by sketching a small fort which topped the hill of Montalban; the child, delighted at the progress of the mimic castle, was silent and attentive. A quick step in the passage startled me; I caught up my infant as the door was flung open, and Philip entered. Fearful of alarming the Earl, I moderated the joy which would have burst into exclamation, and flew towards my brother.—He retreated, fixing an apprehensive

and inquisitive look on the infant.—‘It is your nephew, Philip,’ said I, in a low tone, ‘will you not embrace my child?’—He shuddered and turned away—I burst into tears.

“‘If you make Ma’ Miriam cry,’ said little Mernington, ‘Pa’ will kill you and I’ll help him!’ The brave boy looked like his father; Philip caught him in his arms.

“‘And *my* child, will you not bless *my* child, brother?’

“‘God help the poor little wretch!’ faltered Philip.

“‘A fearful thought struck me.—‘Lord Blessingham is found guilty of murder!’ I exclaimed, breathlessly.

“Philip burst into a wild hysterical laugh.—‘Murder!’ he repeated, ‘oh! ’twas a precious device, worthy of the demon who conceived it!—And fate thus to cooperate with the machinations of a fiend!’

“‘After thirteen months of uncertainty brother,’ said I, ‘is it thus we meet?—Is this the interview the mere anticipation of which made my heart throb with rapture?—To be tantalised with incoherent ravings, to be——.’

“‘Miriam,’ interrupted Philip, ‘had you suffered a tenth part of what I have endured, you could not have met me; I should have wept over my sister’s grave.—Have I not followed you



through all your devious wanderings?—to Lisbon, to Madeira, hither?—Always unfortunate, always disappointed!

"I stood stupified with astonishment! What case of urgency, of life and death could have induced such a separation from Katherine? I gasped for breath. "Then my surmise is true, Lord Blessingham is convicted as the murderer of his wife."

"Wife?" repeated Philip, "devil!"  
 "Brother," said I, indignantly, "revile not the dead."

"He relapsed into his horrible mirth, then shouted in a tone which gradually swelling, rang through the apartment.—I fancied a thousand echoes returned the withering sound.—"Miriam, Beatrice is *not* dead; she lives, and what are you?"

"I staggered; he caught the child from my falling grasp; but a shriek, shrill and piteous, recalled my senses, restored me to strength and resolution. I dashed open the inner door—the Earl knelt—his eyes were fixed in the horrid glare of insanity—I flew towards him—he sprang from me, and falling at Philip's feet, besought him, in mercy, to save him from that woman; she was not his wife, indeed she was not; he was wedded to Miriam; to her only. I approached; he shrieked; and with convulsive shuddering clung to Philip;—'twas a phantom, a bloodless phantom that

pursued him. Beatrice was dead—that woman was not his wife.

“I cannot dwell on a scene which tortures even in recollection.—A trying, heart-rending interval succeeded; our physician pronounced that the Earl’s intellect would be restored, himself never; that returning reason would prove the forerunner of death. This judgement was verified; three days after his attack, he conversed calmly and rationally with Philip, executed his will, addressed to me again the language of devoted attachment. I shed no tear, I breathed no sigh; Philip was astonished at my fortitude—Ah! he knew not, with what energy true affection can inspire weak and timid woman. I listened to the Earl with the composure of serenity; for worlds I would not have added to the pang of separation by a murmur, by even a stifled mean. I heard his last injunction, his last solemn behest, received his last sigh, and then——.

“I awoke from a long mental slumber: a bright sun gilded my apartment, darting its rays on many a well-known object, which, decked by some friendly hand, seemed gay and glittering. I tried to smile in unison with the gladsome scene, and wondered that I could not; my features seemed sternly rigid, and would not relax into cheerfulness; an oppressive weight baffled my efforts to hail with pleasure the scene of my child-

head. I was at La Motte, but where were the joyous emotions which once made my heart throb even with painful delight after absence? Where was my mother?—I tried to trace this turp to its source, but all was confused, vague and fantastic. Had the slumber of hours involved the events of years?—During the body's lethargy had the spirit flown to other countries, other worlds, and returned to foretell futurity?—At length memory slowly unclosed the volume of the past, and pointed with cruel finger to the transactions of the last three years. I would not credit the frightful picture, and with hurried enquiry started from my pillow.

“‘Thank Heaven!’ said a well-known voice.—My faithful Annetto drew back the curtain, and assisted me to rise. She was silent; I could not question her; I had not courage to hear confirmed, as realities, those torturing remembrances which I would still have believed the mere chimeras of a disturbed imagination, induced by a troubled dream. She led me to the window.—There lay the unruffled lake, clear, sparkling; there the giant chain, rearing its many heads in solemn majesty; nearer stood the loved acacias within whose shade I had so often sat with Philip, Egerton, and Katheren; nothing was changed, yet nothing seemed the same.—Oh how saddening is sunshine without, when all is gloom within!’

“ A light but cautious step advanced; the door was slowly opened and Katheren, an infant in her arms, entered. Her enquiring glance was followed by a scream of joy; she sprang to my embrace, placed the babe in my arms, threw hers round my neck, and wept bitterly.—Alas! the tide of deep suffering checks the current of tears; I could not thus exhaust my grief, I could only return her caress; and gaze from my poor child to my sable garments. Thought came too quickly; I was a mother, yet had never been a wife; a widow, yet mourned not a husband! Katheren’s pitying eye watched mine, and read there all the conflicts of my mind, all the depth of my misery. Hope’s glittering bubbles were frozen by chilling certainty; a sinful murmur rose to my lips, I checked it.—On my knees I looked to heaven, clasped my poor boy, and promised the submission of a contrite heart!

“ The tale had been imparted to Katheren, divested of its most prominent horrors.—My misfortunes only increased the fervor of her attachment, and we presented the singular picture of perfect friendship without confidence, for neither could speak of recent events to the other. An opposition of opinions, produced by contrary and natural interests, must have been consequent to explanation; thus, it was by tacit and mutual consent avoided, Katheren pitied and extenuated my

error; she blamed; but still secretly loved her sister.

“The tale of treachery, or of fatality—for I will not accuse Beatrice of what I cannot convict her—I shall briefly relate. Philip, on arriving at Florence, could scarcely credit the strange and stunning story of Lady Blessingham’s existence; her wound he was told had been trifling; she had recovered in a few weeks, and was then in good health at her Casino. Thither Philip, in a state of mind to which madness is preferable, posted; he rushed into her presence unannounced; his impetuosity, his distraction, betrayed his secret.—Gracious Providence, is the spirit of evil indeed permitted at times to possess the form made in thine own image?—This being, wonderful in wickedness, dared to taunt my wretched brother with the degradation of his sister, the daughter of her benefactress! Philip, stung to frenzy, reproached her with having suborned a mental to second her treachery! Beatrice triumphed in the deception; it was meant, she said, to punish; and justly too, the tyrant who had left her, helpless and mangled, to the care of strangers.—‘You cannot possibly assume,’ she scoffingly said, ‘that I could have speculated on the gross consequence of an innocent artifice that was intended to torment, not to injure. Who could have contemplated

the fall of the fastidious, the sensitive Miriam? Is there a mortal sufficiently sanguine and rash to meditate the success of a stratagem which the slightest enquiry might detect? Is it in human nature to suspect that a woman of any delicacy would accept the man who avowed himself the murderer of his wife?" Philip, petrified by a speech which completely baffled his penetration, confounded his judgment, and rendered impotent accusation and reproach, disdained all further expostulation, and left her.

"He had witnessed, he had felt but half her malice; the arrow was sped by a sure eye, a steady hand; it struck at my fame, the only earthly good I now coveted; the artful web by which I was entangled was worthy of the weaver; Beatrice pleaded her cause before admiring crowds; I shrunk tremblingly even from reply. In Florence, in Devonshire, she was followed, believed, worshipped; I was unknown, unpitied and condemned.

"This was her well arranged fiction.—She had been married to a tyrant, who made no secret of his attachment to an unworthy rival. In revenge for her firmness, in refusing to live near the object of this unlawful love, he had robbed her of her child, attempted her life, and fled with his mistress.—Just heaven, how my heart swells while I write the opprobrious term with which I was branded!—The infatuated and, indeed, often in-

same Earl—thus Beatrice designated her husband—seduced by the companion of his guilt, and her accomplice, executed a will, which she, Beatrice, hoped would one day be set aside as illegal; by this instrument he bequeathed all his personal property to an illegitimate child, to the detriment of his lawful heir, her son, and, with an aggravation of injustice, or perhaps with the weakness of decaying intellect, nominated this artful woman, conjointly with her brother, guardians of the young Earl, to the total exclusion of an injured wife.—Such indeed was the tenor of the Earl's will; the property bequeathed to my child, had it been in my power, I would instantly have relinquished; the princely domains of his father descended to the young Earl.

“As my dear grandfather had admonished, without anticipating, alas! the future expediency of such submission, I bowed my head to the blast, and it spared me; but Philip, my beloved, my unfortunate brother! his rage, despair and resistance were overwhelming and fatal; he vented his fury in the most bitter imprecations on the woman who was born, he protested, to be the bane of all that was good within her sphere; he ridiculed coolness in such a cause; who could talk dispassionately of a monster? Even to the unprejudiced, who would have calmly listened to explanation or argument, he poured forth a torrent of invective,

which should have been preceded by alleging his reason for such violence, but this was adverse to his character. Conscious of integrity, of being the injured party, he expected at once unbounded sympathy. His friends departed unconvinced by his violence, and poor Philip, for want of calmness, lost his cause.

“He was soon to oppose more direct warfare, to meet which, we were obliged to return to England. Beatrice, supported by powerful friends, instituted proceedings to set aside the Earl’s will, on the ground of insanity. The same menial who had deceived Sneider into the belief of the death of Lady Blessingham, deposed to irrational conduct on the part of the Earl, prior to his parting from the Countess, and the minions of the latter found little difficulty in suborning evidence at Nice to prove that the Earl was not of sound mind during his last illness. The testimony of a man of such unimpeached integrity as Sir Philip Mornington, corroborated as it was by that of the physician who attended the Earl in his dying moments—and who was fortunately a witness to the will—was however too powerful to be overturned by the arts of my persecutor, and she was foiled. Still she enjoyed the malicious satisfaction of having given publicity to my shame, of having affixed the stamp of disgrace upon the hitherto unblemished name of Mornington. Philip, though



still respected, was pitied by some and censured by others, for supporting the cause of an intriguing woman; he was stung to the quick, and although the consciousness of integrity might have supported him through any personal misfortune, his mind had not sufficient strength to bear up against the acute sense of his sister's degradation. He no longer opposed my decided inclination, and at the age of twenty-one, I renounced a world I had scarcely entered.

"A few months after our return into Devonshire, the elder daughter of my brother, my dear Beatrice, was born. Philip forgot his sorrows for awhile as he embraced his child. At that moment he could not deny his wife her faint and trembling request that the babe should be named (after his maternal grandmother) Beatrice Jernyns. He shuddered, but he consented. In this timid and covert supplication, I saw the latent attachment of Katheren to her sister; nothing could conquer it, and even had we been inclined to communicate the entire tale of guilt, this guileless being would not have believed that such moral turpitude existed. The birth of my darling Katheren, a year subsequent to her sister's, was immediately followed by the death of the mother. What words can describe my feelings when I kissed, for the last time, the icy cheek of my sweet, my kind, my gentle friend!

"Philip, from that hour, never smiled. A withered heart, a sullied name, a discoloured but still adored sister! It was too much for his sanguine and impetuous character; his high spirit was quite subdued; his depression was in proportion to his former buoyancy, and he died literally of a broken heart."

"There are some griefs we cannot speak of; tears are the only tribute I can pay to his memory! On his death-bed Philip gave into my hands a sealed paper, which he requested me to open when he should be no more; I would withhold its contents, but that it justifies the silence I have hitherto observed towards my wards."

"When I am gone, Miriam, the world will find how little I value the judgment that has condemned you; the sneers of the blind multitude have only increased my veneration for your character. Would to heaven I could have emulated the piety which has repelled the dart of malice, blunted the sting of misfortune, and made of weak and trembling woman, a heroine. I have marked, though silently, the uncomplaining spirit which has refrained from the slightest reproach, the slightest murmur, lest it might wring the heart of your brother, of the brother who has destroyed you. I repeat it, the act which humbled you was all my own. The loss of my Katherine has made death doubly welcome, but I have been long weary

of the world; the memory of your wrongs is the gnawing worm which destroys the flowers of life, withers even my parental hopes, and makes me turn with loathing from the prospect of a lengthened existence. — How superior is fortitude to strength! Surely the world will at length learn to estimate the virtue which has made me select you as the sole protectress of my daughters. You are thus named in my will; if I have joined Charles Egerton in this trust, it is because, as a woman, you are unequal to the management of their property; but their persons are committed solely to my sister's care. Let my children resemble you; I require no more. I have forborne to solicit your sanction to this arrangement; you would supplicate me to retract; you would say that a generous rashness was leading me to error, you would implore me not to permit my daughters, the heiresses of my name, my wealth, my dignity, to become the pupils of a woman whom all despise; you would heap obloquy on yourself to induce my recantation. I have pondered on these things, and my resolution is unalterable; interest, inclination, justice, have all prompted me to the course I have adopted. One thing more, Miriam—Keep, oh keep my children from that malignant, that — I will not execrate, I will only conjure that you keep my daughters from her deadly influence! if possible let them remain in ignorance even of her

name. Affection and anxiety at this moment make my mental vision clear, and I *predict* humiliation, wretchedness, to her who falls within the influence of Beatrice! Her's is not a story for unsullied youth; hide from my daughters their fatal affinity to such a —, to their mother's sister—or, if the horrid tale must be told, defer the relation until years shall have matured their judgment. Mean-time guard them from her; armed with her triple tier of falsity, she will delude and destroy. The lips of a Christian should pronounce pardon, but my heart, my loathing heart, cannot. Heaven forgive me, not, as I forgive her!—the parting hour may bring a calmer feeling. My prejudice against one person has long ceased; the Earl of Dunane has been more than justified (in my eyes at least) for his conduct. It is not probable, but it is possible, he may one day acknowledge his grand-nieces; to him alone, or to that family, should circumstances compel, you may resign the guardianship of my children, but not before you have formed them by your precepts, your example, and shown the erring world how well you have requited the unlimited confidence of a brother.'

"Such were the last requests, the last injunctions of my dear Philip; I have hitherto fulfilled them, heaven knows with what painful constancy!

"A few days after the grave had closed on my

only friend, I received a letter from Lady Blessingham's solicitor, threatening, that unless I immediately relinquished the guardianship of the young Earl to his mother, an application would be made to the Lord Chancellor to deprive me of that trust, as a person whose character unfitted her for the performance of its duties. Destitute and friendless, could I cope with power and numbers? I shrank from a second exposure, yet my heart smote me as I wrote a resignation of my claims over the sweet boy, who was as dear to me as my own.

“To fly from England, to bury myself in the solitude of La Motte, to devote the remainder of my life to the helpless objects of my care, these were my resolves. Beatrice was at the castle; its vicinity to Mornington Hall, and the apprehension of her coming in person to claim her son, made me precipitate the preparations for our departure; employment shielded me at least from the lassitude of sorrow; I could not voluntarily relinquish the child, and hoped that Beatrice, respecting the memory of her sister's husband, would postpone, at least for a few months, the enforcement of her claims. At La Motte I should bear the parting with more fortitude. Still there were many arrangements to be made before I could leave England for ever. Mornington Hall, with the estate immediately pertaining to it, was the only portion

of my brother's property that went with the title; these devolved to that distant relative, with whom our family had been at variance. It was no longer a home, no longer even an asylum, for Sir William Mornington had not had the courtesy to insure me the privilege of privacy during my compelled continuance in his house. The mere revisal and assortment of my brother's papers would, I knew, require considerable time, and although my lacerated feelings shrunk from the exertion, I forced myself to enter at once upon the painful task.

"One morning I was pursuing this melancholy employment in the library, when I accidentally opened my mother's last letter to Philip; it breathed the very spirit of love for her unfortunate daughter. Totally unnerved by this affecting appeal to my brother, in behalf of his orphan sister, I rang for the children, hoping their prattle would prevent the indulgence of those reflections which might unfit me for action. I took the infant Katheren from her nurse's arms, and almost smiled at perceiving my usually wild and turbulent Edward restrain his riotous pace, to support the tottering steps of his cousin Beatrice, whom he led forward with all the pride of a protector, and slowly and carefully seated at my feet. I enquired for Mornington.—'Brother Morton,' lisped Edward, 'has been crying; he is gone with An-

nette into the park.' The boy had drooped ever since I had spoken to him of our separation; he had both sense and sensibility far beyond his years; I had made him comprehend that this parting was inevitable; the affectionate child would smother his grief in my presence, but it would burst forth when I quitted him, with such violence as to make the doating Annette tremble for her darling. Edward, like the most skilful nurse, had arranged himself on the carpet so as to shield his cousin from the slightest accident, and had cleared his little throat to repeat the morning hymn, when Sneider entered, and with a look of perturbation not unmixed with satisfaction, very unusual to the sedate Swiss, announced 'a gentleman.' Surprised that my faithful servant should disobey my peremptory orders that no stranger should be admitted, I was about to question him, but the apparition, as I at first thought, of a long lost friend transfixed me—I looked again—it was indeed Sir Charles Egerton, that tried, that valued, that unaltered friend!

"He had been abroad for nearly seven years, but had returned to England on receiving my brother's letter nominating him the guardian of his children's property. He had heard and entirely discredited the tale of calumny, and had hastened to offer his assistance to the unfortunate woman whom all others joined in reviling. He did more;

he listened to a story told with all the piteous eloquence of truth and sorrow; to him my artless tale needed neither evidence nor protestation; it carried conviction by its simplicity, and won sympathy by the agony which such bitter confidence called forth. Calumniated, despised, condemned, forsaken, I was still the object of his steady attachment; my misfortunes, he said, only encreased his respect; his affection nothing could heighten, as nothing could destroy. Should I have been worthy of such generosity had I been capable of abusing it? My gratitude was heartfelt, but my decision was irrevocable, it left no opening for argument. Charles knew my character, and would not encrease my sufferings by unavailing remonstrance.

"I spoke of my anxiety to return to Switzerland; he took on himself all arrangements, smoothed all difficulties, and gave me the prospect of a speedy departure. Thus soothed into composure, I submitted to his judgment my plans for the education of my nieces; he listened with attention, then startled me by enquiring whether I had formed any for my own child.

"At this moment the door was thrown open, and Snider, every feature swollen with indignation, burst into the room; he had no time for explanation; a gentleman entered, supporting a



lady closely veiled; the beautiful and majestic figure could not be mistaken: it was Beatrice!

I had risen, but appalled by this recognition, and unable to support myself, I obeyed the kind signal of my observant friend, and resumed my seat. The gentleman, advancing, announced himself as Sir William Mornington. 'I think Sir,' said Charles, pointedly, 'the first visit to your so lately acquired possession, might have been made at a less expense than that of delicacy and decorum; my regretted friend Sir Philip Mornington, could not have foreseen such early intrusion on the retirement of his sister; I am his executor, Sir Charles Egerton, and am sorry you compel me to suggest that, as an entire stranger to this lady, you should, at least, have had the politeness to have announced your visit.'

" 'Sir,' said the other, with a sarcastic smile, 'I was warranted in my intrusion, as you call it, by the Countess of Blessingham; no one can claim priority of acquaintance, to her, with that lady. We knew not that Miss Mornington had already chosen a protector.'

" 'Found one you should have said, Sir,' interrupted Charles coolly, 'but this is no place for discussion, the day is fine, I will have the honor of accompanying you into the park.'

" 'I was frightened, but the dignified serenity of

Egerton's countenance reassured me; he bent to me with profound respect, slightly saluted the Countess, bowed Sir William out of the room, followed him, and I was left with Beatrice.

"During this singular scene I had not even presence of mind to send away the children; from the first appearance of Lady Blessingham, Edward had continued to gaze on her with looks of deep awe and admiration; she now threw aside her veil, advanced, and knelt to embrace the infant in my arms, then bent towards the wondering cherub at my feet.—'Your name my pretty one?'—'That's Katheren,' said the sturdy Edward, 'and this is my cousin Beatrice.'—'Beatrice is it?' she cried, half apostrophizing, half addressing me.—I bowed. 'Then my Katheren,' she ejaculated, clasping her hands and raising her beautiful head, 'did not disclaim me!—Miriam,' she continued, 'I come to supplicate, if necessary to kneel, to acknowledge the severity into which resentment betrayed me, the resentment of a deserted wife. We have both erred, Miriam; there was mutual injury, let there be mutual forgiveness; I will retract my allegations, vindicate your rectitude, declare my belief that your indiscretion was the consequence of my imprudent though justifiable deception; I will free that child from the stigma which must, else, attach to him, shield him from contumely, and place him on equality with his le-

gitimate brother. Miriam, seven years have elapsed since we parted; let this meeting be marked by reconciliation; let us date from it a generous extinction of past antipathies, and hail it as the harbinger of future friendship.'

"As Beatrice spoke my mind grew calm; I had breathed a mental prayer for firmness, and it was answered.

" 'You are silent Miriam,' continued Beatrice; 'you will not reply to the supplication of your former companion; you refuse the hand thus extended in perfect amity.'

" 'I would hear the price of your offered amnesty Beatrice,' said I, 'for myself, I do not foresee any benefit from your forbearance, but, for my child, I would know how it is to be won.'

"A slight suffusion tinged her cheek, but she mastered her emotion. 'You call it, the price, Miriam, I would name it, the pledge, of our reunion; let me share with you the care of these dear infants; give up to me, at least, one of my sister's children; that sleeping seraph who bears my Katheren's name.'

"I pressed the babe still closer. 'Countess of Blessingham, you have caused every fibre in this poor trembling frame to thrill with agony; had you the power to make each quivering nerve a thousand, and to multiply your tortures in proportion, I would not comply with your request!'

" 'Think well ere you determine,' said Beatrice, 'if I abandon you what is your resource?'

" 'Myself and Heaven!' I exclaimed; 'my conscience and my God!'

" 'Miriam,' said Beatrice, in a voice low and trembling from suppressed passion, 'you think that you can calculate my power to torture, but you cannot estimate its extent. When that poor boy, who now lifts his little hands as if to deprecate his mother's obstinacy, shall spring to youth, to manhood, and find the bright and joyous feelings of such gladsome seasons withered by the touch of shame, how will he view the parent who could have saved, yet would not? Behold him, Miriam, the pining victim of that ignominy which paralyses all his budding energies, crushed, destroyed by the deadly stamp of disgrace!'

" 'Monster!' I shrieked, 'would you madden, to win me to your wishes? My mother, oh my mother! Beatrice, her eye now marks us both; she is my protecting, your accusing spirit; she registers the vow I make never to sacrifice my brother's child; I will not proclaim my motives, I will not retort the foul aspersions you have cast upon my fame. Heaven will judge between us! hereafter all will be reversed, your hour of tribulation will then arrive!'

" Beatrice rushed towards the bell, which she rang violently.—'Order hither the Earl of Bles-

singham.' The astonished Saeider, casting at me a pitying and respectful glance, closed the door. 'The world,' she continued, furiously, 'will soon penetrate those hidden motives which your hypocrisy would ascribe to immaculate pavity. Infamous woman! to forward plans in which you are protected by your new partmann, you separate these children from their exalted relative; you dread the influence which would make your scheme abortive of uniting the offspring of dishonour with the daughter of my sister, the co-heiress of Sir Philip Mornington. Oh, disinterested being, who thus plights a vow so equitable!

"There was nothing to wound in this distempered rant; I at once formed my resolution, and remained silent. My poor Edward, frightened by the violence of Beatrice, had retreated behind my chair, from which he cast stolen glances of apprehension and enquiry. Beatrice saw that her resentment and reproaches were unfelt.—'That boy,' she said, sarcastically, 'believes his imputed birth; he resembles Egerton rather than Blessingham.'

"The heartless allusion to one ever deplored, never forgotten, made me shudder; I kissed my child, and spoke not. At that moment my beloved Mornington, followed by Annette, bounded into the room. The beautiful creature already wore that proud air of conscious dignity which

had once distinguished his unfortunate father; he stopped abruptly at sight of a stranger, and looked wistfully at me. Beatrice sprang towards him. 'My child, my darling,' she exclaimed, 'at last you are restored to your, so long, bereaved mother!' She threw her arms around him.

"I will not cry, Ma' Miriam," said the noble boy, "for I would not vex you; I will go with her."

"What the mother's malignity could not compass, was at once effected by the simple pathos of the child; I was completely subdued, and burst into tears.

"Let me go, let me go to her," said the struggling boy; "you shall not keep me from mamma."

"Morington," I exclaimed, reproachfully: in a moment he was tractable.

"God help me," cried Beatrice, wringing her hands, "she has robbed me of my son's affections too, my own child will never love me!"

"I will love you though," said the boy, soothingly, "I will, for Ma' Miriam says I ought, and love you better than her too; it will be very hard," he added with a deep sigh, "but I will try."

"Beatrice looked, for once, confounded; she turned to Annette—"You may attend the Earl, Annette."

"Annette colored.—'I don't like to leave my

mistress, for long, my lady; but my mistress wishes me to attend Lord Blessingham.'

" 'Sneider also may resume his situation in my household.'

" 'Sneider cannot leave my mistress,' replied Annette, curtsying and trembling.

" 'If so,' said Beatrice, sarcastically, 'as I cannot advocate a husband's deserting his wife, you may both remain.'

" 'Then I'll stay too,' said little Mornington: expostulation and entreaty were equally unavailing; the boy proved that he inherited a portion of his mother's spirit; he perceived that I would not interfere, this was sufficient; Beatrice was unwilling to incur the exposure of opposition, and Annette was now requested to accompany the child. The faithful creature took leave, with many tears, promising to join me at La Motte; Mornington kissed me a thousand times, enquiring whether he were to stay away, very long, and whether brother Edward might not come to see him sometimes. Beatrice promised every thing to sooth him; I could not speak; the child sobbed hysterically when he flung his arms round his cousin Katheren, who had been his dearest plaything. The painful interview, and as painful parting, were at length over.

" Charles Egerton found me in an agony of

grief; I enquired for Sir William Mornington. 'It did not require much penetration to discern a coward in the man who could wantonly insult a woman,' said he; 'the bully soon sinks into the driveller; you will hear no more of him.'

"I now detailed the incidents of the trying scene which had just passed. Charles again besought me to consider the advantages I should derive from his name and protection.—'It is a name Charles,' I said, 'that must not be dishonoured; your children never should be reproached with a mother's shame—never shall, through my selfishness: it is enough to contend with the taunts which are levelled at this poor unconscious boy. Heaven help him! his earthly guardian is indeed powerless!'

"Then let me be his protector Miriam; believe me I would not urge this painful measure, were I not persuaded it will save both mother and son from many a pang; there is no other expedient left by which the anticipated triumph of Beatrice can be disappointed; see him when, and where you please; your wards once established, you may then claim your son, proudly conscious of the merit of your sacrifice; Edward, matured by years and education, will have fortitude to hear the story of your wrongs, and the man will smile, perhaps, at the fancied degradation which might cramp the spirit of the boy.'



“But why recapitulate the arguments employed by this true friend, to induce me to part with my child? From the moment I had heard Lady Blessingham’s invidious interpretation of my motive for refusing her request, I had decided on separating the cousins, but her subsequent malicious taunt relative to Sir Charles Egerton, made me irresolute. Soon, however, I condemned my indecision; in my own person I was free to defeat her inuendo, by making this a final meeting with my generous friend, but was I at liberty to bereave my child of such a protector? the only person to whom I could with entire satisfaction commit him. I yielded; Charles felt the propriety of my resolution to see him no more, and we prolonged this melancholy interview until our plans were fully arranged. I was to resume the name of ‘Jermyn,’ by which also my poor boy was to be designated. Shunned by, and shunning society, it was not probable that my wards should, unless through myself, become acquainted with a narrative which, as poor Philip had observed, was indeed unfit for the ears of childhood: to this communication I was to be led by circumstances alone, and I determined that nothing but unavoidable necessity should induce me to reveal to them the story of my own errors and the turpitude of Beatrice, before the period fixed on by their father. To this resolution I have hitherto

steadily adhered ; my nieces are unconscious even of the existence of their mother's sister, but the time approaches when I must communicate my eventful history, for accident, the most unforeseen, has introduced them to my son.

“But to return ; behold me again in my mountain solitude, endeared by many a treasured association.—Oh memory, thy sweets and bitters are so blended, so balanced, that were the cup of oblivion to be presented, even to me, I know not whether I should drink or turn from the draft !

## CHAPTER XII.

I've wept, till anguish could not draw a tear  
From the once gushing fount of joy and grief!  
I've knelt, till mis'ry could not find a pray'r  
To tell its wretchedness, or ask relief!

My sorrow wins no sympathy, cold scorn  
To hopelessness my spirit would consign;  
But earth has one sure home for the forlorn!  
And Heaven hath healing for more woes than mine!

"YEARS passed away, unmarked, save by the persecution of my tormentor; four times she drove me from my peaceful retreat by appearing in its vicinity; in vain did I fly her malice; defamation, with extensive spread and thousand tongues, met the hunted victim wherever she sought for refuge. Beatrice seemed to be gifted with ubiquity to work evil; how often did I bless the kind persuasion that had lessened my fears by removing the object through whom her power to wound would indeed have been deadly! When my child had completed his sixth year, I committed him to the person deputed by Sir Charles Egerton to receive him; my wards, the younger then three, the elder four

years old, wept at parting with their brother (as they called him) but they were too young to retain impressions, and in a few months he was entirely forgotten; Edward, on the contrary, whom I met at stated periods, and with whom I constantly corresponded, long preserved the most lively recollection of his cousins, particularly of the beautiful little Katheren, but absence and change of scene gradually obliterated the impression they had made, and when he went to college, at seventeen, they too were almost forgotten.

“Annette left the service of the Countess in a few years, and settled with her husband at La Motte, whither I always returned when my dreaded persecutor withdrew from Geneva. The young Earl, Annette informed me, had grieved so much at being separated from his early friends, that the Countess (who to do her justice, Annette observed, doated on her son) had long been in despair at his visible decline. He recovered, but his spirits were quite gone; his once brilliant complexion had changed to a sickly tint, and his animated countenance now wore the character of thoughtful melancholy; it is singular that the effect remained after the cause had been long removed, for Annette, terrified at this dangerous sensibility, carefully abstained from recurring to person or place which might prolong the memory of his regretted companions, and the Earl had, she said, for many

years ceased to mention his brother and cousins, or to weep for his once adored Mamma Miriam. His own mother he idolized.—‘ And it is really wonderful Madam,’ continued the good Annette, ‘ to see how the Countess is worshipped; she has had many splendid offers, and has refused them all; if I could but forget former days, I should say she is an angel.’

“ A few months after my son had been settled at Oxford, I was again terrified by the appearance of Lady Blessingham at Geneva, and Sneider informed me he had heard from the servants of Madame de Clusac that the Countess intended remaining for some time at Emmienthal.

“ Hitherto my wards, surrounded by those on whom I could depend, educated almost entirely by myself, and kept in the strictest seclusion, never enquired the motive which impelled my many wanderings; but they were no longer children; Katheren was nearly fifteen, and her sister a year older; it was necessary to assign some reason for our sudden flight,—for on flight I was determined. I trembled at the mere idea of being again intruded on and insulted by Beatrice, of being perhaps again called on to give up my precious deposit; my resolution was quickly taken; the sisters were already acquainted with my early friend, Madame de Courzel, at whose country seat near Versailles, I had twice met my son. Ka-

theren's genius had long outsoared my poor capacity for instruction, and assigning but one motive, that of her improvement, as the cause of my journey, I quitted La Motte, with the avowed determination to spend a few months at Passy.

“ My friend received me with her accustomed warmth ; her situation kept her almost entirely at the palace, but in her retired and rural little chateau I lived in seclusion almost as complete as at La Motte. I had indeed to withstand her repeated expostulations and entreaties for the introduction of the sisters ; their youth was a sufficient excuse for my denial, but at no period of their lives should I have wished them to move in the scene which the Court of Marie Antoinette then presented. Katheren particularly, I guarded with the strictest vigilance ; her extraordinary beauty, combining all her grandmother's winning graces and enchanting expression, all her aunt's surpassing symmetry and harmony of feature, had already made her, even in the little circle accustomed to her attractions, an object of wonder. I had detected the lurking vanity which I feared wanted but encouragement to spring forth and overshadow the goodly promise of her mind, and determined if possible to keep her from any sphere which might nurture this noxious propensity. Her singular and interesting character reminds me often

of her father, sometimes (seldom indeed) of her aunt, never of her mother; impetuous, generous, proud, spirited, ambitious, governed by feeling rather than reason, capable of the most exalted sacrifices, the most heroic virtue, and yet perpetually led by imprudent confidence in herself to the very verge of indiscretion. Conscious of high and noble impulses, she thinks her fall impossible and gives to the errors of others a sympathy totally free from selfishness, for she never contemplates the possibility of, herself, becoming an object of compassion. Beatrice, on the contrary, mild, timid, unambitious, will always keep the track marked out for her, and turn with horror from the tempter who might try to warp those principles which she had adopted from thorough conviction; better shielded by meekness than her sister by pride, doubting her own firmness, she would not approach even the outward verge of that vortex into which Katheren, (depending too much on energies which may one day fail her) would fearlessly plunge. I love them both, as dearly as ever mother loved her children, but Katheren is secretly my most, beloved, perhaps because my most, anxious, care. Alas for human foresight!—While I only anticipated evil to my son in her person, entirely overlooking her lovely but less bewitching sister, my unhappy

Edward, untouched by Katherine's fascination, is the victim of an unfortunate, and I much fear not unrequited passion for Beatrice.

"The terror which had caused my flight from Switzerland had scarcely subsided, when, as if fate interposed between me and tranquility, every pulse was again tumultuously excited by a letter from my son. At college he had formed a friendship which, with all the warmth of youthful fervor, he vowed could only cease with his existence. The object of this imperishable attachment was eulogised in the same romantic strain, and the description of his paragon resembled more a sketch of the *preux chevalier* of former days, than the panegyric of a modern Pylades.—With what mingled feelings of pain, pleasure and astonishment did I discover that the possessor of all these exalted attributes, this idol of my poor Edward's glowing fancy, was his brother, was the Earl of Blessingham!—That they should have met without recognition was only natural; my son, but four years old when his brother left us, had long forgotten him, and unless Mornington had been gifted with miraculous memory, he could not have recognised in young Jermyn the, Edward, whom he had never known by any other name. I could not help admiring the chance that had thus thrown them together, had thus united them by a tie which I had reason to know might prove as strong



as the natural one that secretly connected them. Doubting however the consequences of this association, I instantly wrote to Sir Charles Egerton, and was advised not to interrupt, by untimely disclosure, a friendship which, if suffered to take root, might ultimately allay all animosity, and be productive of the most beneficial result to both brothers. I yielded to this judgment, but could not conquer apprehensions which I wished to consider unfounded, and awaited impatiently a visit from my son, who had promised to meet me at Paris. This was now my only inducement for, remaining at Passy, as I had heard, through Annette, that Lady Blessingham had returned to Florence.

“ Instead of the promised visit I received a letter from Edward; a glance at the post mark made me almost incapable of opening it,—it was Florence! My son wrote that he had been persuaded by the Earl to accompany him during the vacation in a pleasurable tour to Italy; they were then at Lady Blessingham’s villa on the Arno; Circe could not have possessed such power of enchantment as the mistress of this mansion; no antidote, no caution could possibly protect *her* guests from the fascination of her manners, her beauty, her talents. — Were the cup she presented ever so nauseous, it could not be rejected! Edward continued in the same lively strain:—‘ Should the Countess determine to prove her influence, by

working unseemly transformation in my person or character, I am lost, for indeed, dear mother, I cannot resist her. She has assigned me the post of *servante* to her protégée, the pretty Eva, who is as playful as wilful, and as saucy as either. This merry heiress, whom every body worships but nobody wins, was once, the Countess informs me, destined to be the bride of Blessingham; Eva denies all participation in, or even knowledge of this plot, which she declares must have suddenly sprung from the fertile brain of the Countess, who had never before even glanced at such incongruous union.—‘No, no,’ continues this wild rattle, ‘the Earl is too ‘melancholy and gentleman-like;’ stately and sallow like a Hindoo Zemindar, serious and solemn as the great Soubah himself, fit to be emblazoned in the mysterious Zend as some grim genius of the Magian cried; I am not of his caste, nor, although I respect and esteem Blessingham, do I wish to be; he recalls to memory, too powerfully, those gloomy Gentoos by whom I was surrounded for sixteen years, and who, had it not been for the counteracting influence of dear nurse Sinda would, in their absurd idolatry, have debased me into an idol, crammed me into a pagoda, placed me on a pedestal, and bestowed on their new divinity salaams as profound as were ever given to the monster of Juggernaut. No, her lady-

The image shows a document page that is almost entirely obscured by dense, horizontal black lines. These lines appear to be either heavy redactions or severe scanning artifacts. The lines are closely spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving very little legible text visible. The overall appearance is that of a corrupted or heavily censored document.

Charles Egerton, and has honored me by very particular inquiries as to my prospects in life.'

"Imagine the bitterness of my feelings when I read this letter!—The terrible recollections which the mention of this Tuscan Villa revived!—Was it then to prove fatal alike to father and son?—Was Beatrice to crown her persecution by at last ensnaring him, whose escape from her machinations I had purchased by years of privation?—I saw, at once, that this wily woman had recognised the being through whom I was most vulnerable.—Wed! my child wed a protégée of Lady Blessingham!—Had the connexion been creditable would Beatrice have planned it?—Would a poor nameless boy of eighteen have been selected, by her, from the suitors of wealth, beauty and innocence?—Impossible!—My child was to be betrayed into a disgraceful union, to be told the story of his mother's infamy, to be taught to echo, the slander of her calumniators, to condemn, to desert his miserable parent!—What an aggregate of evil was conjured up in one moment of thought!—I would not trust to a letter; I would instantly go to my son, reveal the story of my wrongs, and bid him choose between me and the siren whom, unwittingly, he had so aptly designated.—Was it indeed decreed that she should work unseemly transformation in his character?—I would however lose nothing by delay. For the first time in my

life, I left my wards, confiding in the protestations of Madame de Courzel that she would supply my place in the strictest sense, as the Queen had gone to Marly, whither my friend never accompanied her. Alas! my knowledge of the mutability and thoughtlessness which are interwoven in the texture of the French character, should have made me doubt her adherence to these promises.

“My journey was performed with rapidity proportioned to the agitation and excitement of my feelings. I had written to Sneider, desiring that he and Annette would meet me at Pisa, and, attended by these faithful servants, I entered Florence. After writing to my son, from the hotel to which I was guided by Sneider, I endeavoured to summon fortitude for my trying disclosure.

“Edward came.—I shrank from his embrace.—My poor boy regarded me with wonder and apprehension; I could not reassure him; a word of endearment would have unfitted me for my task, and, after brief preface, my painful narrative was commenced. I could scarcely judge of the sensation my story excited; from the moment I described my interview with Philip, at Nice, Edward had covered his face with his hands, and sat motionless; I detected a slight shudder when I detailed the particulars of the suit by which I was publicly branded as his father’s mistress, but I finished my terrible communication without his

having made a single comment, one moment—one frightful moment of suspense ensued —. —Was I condemned or pitied?

“Edward withdrew his hands from his colorless face; with a mien as erect, a step as firm as ever, he approached and knelt before me. ‘Mother,’ he said, ‘I swear, that not for the earldom of Blessingham, not even to legalise my unhappy birth, would I forsake you, would I owe obedience to the mother of my brother!’ The emphatic, the blissful assurance was pronounced, my nerves, strained to unnatural tension, suddenly relaxed, and I fainted.

“The first flash of joy that had visited me for many years, awaited my recovery; my child was with me,—mine more than ever! Doubts soon vanished in the delights of reciprocal confidence; an impression had been made on my son’s fancy, not on his heart; the only one, he said, who shared his affection with me, was his brother. ‘My dear Mornington!’ I ejaculated. ‘Mornington!’ repeated Edward, ‘how often have I wondered at the strange coincidence.—Oh, my mother, should he disclaim me, I shall indeed deplore the misfortune of my birth!’ Let me bid him farewell; he loves me; he will compel his mother to justice; what a proud triumph for his noble nature! No sacrifice is beyond his magnanimity. Let me see him; let me see him to-night; the

Countess knows you are here, she will poison his mind unless we prevent it by previous disclosure, I will send a note by Snieder instantly.'

"My son has all the impetuosity which characterised poor Philip; his resolves are executed thoughtlessly and precipitately. I foresaw the danger of this interview, I expostulated with Edward.—Would a son endure to bear a parent vilified? The Countess had already told her tale, had already won Mornington to her interests. I knew Beatrice too well to think she would incur the vast risk of delay. A child would be incredulous of a mother's infamy, the disclosure would be unkind, ungenerous.

"My arguments were unavailing; Edward persisted; he would not stigmatise Lady Blessingham, he would only compel a cessation of her persecution, vindicate his mother.—I discerned the latent smart which urged him to this, in the paleness of his countenance, the wildness of his manner. He would not distress me by acknowledging that he even felt the sting, but his involuntary and piteous exclamations were more heart-rending than the bitterest burst of grief. I had not firmness to oppose, and Mornington was sent for.

"The salon opened by folding doors into my chamber, whither I retired, to guard against the consequences of dispute. I had not courage to

meet Mornington, neither did Edward request it. In the measured step with which the Earl advanced into the adjoining room, I discerned the correctness of my conclusion; such would not have been his approach, had he remained ignorant of the strange involutions of our destinies. I only sought to prevent mischief, not to intrude on confidence; so long therefore as the brothers spoke in subdued tones, I was inattentive, but a sudden burst from Edward made me fly to the intervening door; my hand was on the lock; a sad sweet voice, which came to my ear like the accent of one long departed, arrested me:—‘I know Edward, and I lament, that you have adopted the dangerous theories of our modern sceptics, but I had to learn that you could advocate the cause of immorality!’—The words fell cold upon my heart; was this the boy I had loved, watched, wept for?—I had no time for tears.—‘Defamer!’ shouted Edward, ‘heartless slanderer! Call you *my* mother immoral?—I retort your aspersion, I fling it to one to whom it better belongs.—Would to Heaven it were also in my power to fling at your feet the paltry dress which provoked that female Phalaris to the public exposure of my poor wronged parent.—But I war no longer with words; victory will side with truth; I dare you to the proof!’

“ I would have broken upon them, but



again the mild impressive voice spoke.—“Edward, remember it was your cutting, cruel sarcasm which provoked mine; the most subtle refinement of reproach, however, will prove unavailing to win my hand against a brother. Take my life if it be a grateful—I would it were a guiltless sacrifice, but part with the conviction of my mother’s rectitude! as soon would I commute my soul’s eternal peace! Let the calmness with which I speak, convince you that I entirely discredit the tale by which you have been deluded; did the slightest doubt of her honor flash upon my brain, your weapon would be needless.”

“I listened with rapt attention: could I condemn in one brother the filial affection which I applauded in the other?”

“‘Henceforth, then, we are strangers, or if not strangers, foes,’ cried my impetuous son.”

“‘You have said it, I never could!’ faltered Mornington, ‘Edward, let me make a last appeal: Had you listened to my noble mother—’”

“‘And had you listened to mine,’ interrupted my son, ‘think you Earl of Blessingham, that I would exchange their patent of nobility; the one claiming it by nature, the other winning it by artifice, or if it please you better, by accident?’”

“‘Brother,’ said Mornington, ‘chance is direction which thou canst not see; even in this world Providence favors and exalts the upright.’”

“ ‘Then,’ exclaimed Edward, impressively, ‘this world will behold the downfall of Lady Blessingham; but let us cease useless recrimination, my lord; we will, if you please, separate, never, I hope, to meet again.’ ”

“ ‘Is that wish heartfelt, Edward?’ said Mornington; ‘if so, how have you deceived me! Once I would have smiled had fancy suggested the possibility of our alienation—part for ever!—must we?—At least return my farewell; grudge not one kind pressure, one look, one friendly word.—You will not.—God bless you Edward, God bless you!’ He walked towards the door, then seemed to linger. All was still; my heart throbbed audibly—slowly retreating footsteps told the melancholy termination of this meeting.

“ I was roused from gloomy forebodings by a burst of grief; the firmness of poor Edward had vanished with his brother; I would have flown after Mornington, had my son permitted, but he passionately protested that tortures should not induce him to compromise his mother’s character, by betraying his attachment to one who condemned her.

“ Edward refused to return to college; he alleged, in excuse, a disinclination to entering the church, for which he had been designed; he spoke of joining our army in America, or of siding with

the insurgents. In his unsettled principles, fluctuating plans, and inconsistent speculations, I foresaw, with terror, the abolition of those hopes which his energetic mind and sanguine temper had once promised; both his guardian and I had judged his disposition too buoyant, too elastic, to be long depressed. I determined to go with him to La Motte, and await the counsel of Sir Charles Egerton; there, by entreaties and attention, I soothed his wounded spirit; at length he reluctantly consented to return to his guardian, but neither expostulation, reasoning, nor blandishments could induce his resuming his academic studies. Driven to confession, by my unwise perseverance, he declared he could not mingle with his former companions while an acute sense of secret degradation goaded and harassed him with the dread of discovery. I was at once silenced, and bitterly repented the ill-judged secrecy which had reserved such a confidence for the most sensitive period of existence. To win him from the apathy into which he was sinking, I once mentioned, though tremblingly, the young person of whom he had given so lively a description; his smile, however, was a sufficient assurance of his indifference.—‘My dearest mother,’ he said, ‘did I regret my brother, only as I regret her, you would not have to combat my wayward temper, my capricious, my ungrateful conduct; and yet I

have met with no female more attractive, more apparently artless, than Eva Vanesk.'

"I started from my seat; scenes long past rushed to memory.—'Vanesk!' I repeated, 'from India! and her father an indescribable mixture of benevolence, and harshness, of facetious humour and generous eccentricity?'

"'Harsh and eccentric in good earnest,' said Edward, 'but forbidding, morose and imperious.'

"'Then it cannot be my dear old friend,' I cried.

"'Old!' repeated Edward, 'this in every sense magnificent Nabob, (for his figure exactly answers my conception of majestic) can be little more than forty.'

"I felt no farther curiosity concerning this person; he was plainly not our good Vanesk, who, if he still lived, must have numbered twice as many years,

"This conversation consoled me, in some degree, for I discovered that Edward's breach with his brother was more keenly felt, than even the stigma by which he supposed himself severed from society.

"But now my parental perplexities were for a time suspended, by letters from Versailles: imagine my consternation: Katheren, my unsophisticated Katheren, had been suddenly transplanted from the security of perfect seclusion, to the de-

structive atmosphere of a court ! turned from precepts of humility and self-denial, exposed to the seductive allurements of grandeur and ambition, to the intoxication of gratified pride and unbounded admiration. My susceptible Katherine, the favorite of the queen ! the object of adulation, mischievous at any age, but at hers pernicious ! My son saw my perturbation, learned its cause, and generously relieved me of all anxiety on this account, by instantly returning to his guardianship ; no longer apprehended his military prepossessions ; for a treaty of peace was then under consideration ; and the war, virtually, at an end.

“ In a few months I was again settled, in comparative tranquillity, with my wards, at La Motte ; my efforts were unceasing to overcome the injurious tendency which the sentiments of Katherine had acquired ; partiality for this treasure may render me sanguine, yet at times I tremble.

“ About twelve months back, a letter from my invaluable friend, then in Greece, whither he had gone to divert the mind of Edward, recommended strongly an appeal to the Earl of Danvers, and enforced the advantage of his (the Earl's) protection to his grand-nieces. ‘ It will,’ wrote Charles, ‘ at once relieve you from all anxiety concerning their introduction to the world, and remove the only barrier to your residing with your son. Edward is importunate on the subject ; it will not

be in my power, long to keep him from you; the Earl's patronage may prove of serious advantage to yourself; though an Irishman and a Catholic, his influence, owing to his political principles, is powerful and extensive.'

'I was aware of the soundness of this reasoning, and of the necessity of acting on his suggestion: the birth and fortunes of my nieces entitled them to a distinguished place in society. Could I claim it for them?—Impossible! I was for ever excluded. Yet to none, save to their Irish relatives, could I entrust them. The delicacy of Charles forbade his touching on any thing which might wound or mortify, but I thought I detected in the style of his letter, that some unrevealed motive prompted his advising this separation. I knew it would be painful, but I had been all my life accustomed to the sacrifice of self: the welfare of my nieces now required it, and I instantly wrote to the Earl of Dunane. In due time I received a cold, formal reply; one might have thought that in a lapse of two-and-twenty years, the bitterness of exasperation, for which no adequate cause had been ever assigned, would have subsided, but the Earl decidedly rejected all applications made in behalf of the relatives of Beatrice Sorenzo, refusing even to acknowledge their claim of consanguinity. Still I was not discouraged; I looked at the beautiful and interest-

ing creatures thus cast off, and determined that the Danane family should behold at least, the attractive beings so heartlessly disowned.

"When Beatrice had attained her seventeenth year, I prepared once more to quit my country. To this proceeding I was farther induced, by a letter from Edward, then at Egerton Castle, Northumberland: he declared he could no longer remain under the protection of his guardian; a rumour had been circulated that he was in reality the son of Sir Charles Egerton; he would not affix a second stigma to his mother's fame, by incurring continued obligation to his generous patron. It was unnecessary to trace this report; it could spring from one source only, but he would, if possible, prevent a recurrence of such calumnies; when of age, he would resign that wealth the loss of which he concluded was the secret spur to such undying malignity, and make his own way in the world—not that he cared for the hatred of Lady Blessingham, but he would prove his, his mother's contempt for the dress she coveted.—I will not argue this point with my son; perhaps he only meets my wishes; but in suspecting Lady Blessingham of mercenary motives, he wrongs her; had this bequest never been made, the enmity of Beatrice would have been as bitter; it springs from her early and unconquerable hatred to myself. I entreated my son to

remain with his guardian until the result of my visit to Ireland should be known.—There, thought I, at least I shall be safe from persecution—for Beatrice had always expressed a horror of the country; either the remembrance of her disasters, or some secret consciousness, blanched her cheek at the mention even of its name.

“The troubles which had for more than two years agitated Geneva, gave me a pretext for quitting its vicinity; many Genevese had already emigrated,—a considerable number to Ireland. I spoke of that country, of its beauties, such as my mother had often described them from the glowing portraiture of her beloved Katheren Conwaye. Their granddaughter Katheren is an enthusiast in the sublimity of nature—‘If we must emigrate for awhile from dear Switzerland, Mamma,’ said she, ‘let it be to Ireland.’—We came.

“A short time before we quitted La Motte, the French woman Pauline presented herself to Katheren as an attendant; she told a piteous tale, which excited the compassion of my ward. Sneider recognised in this woman a niece of the person who deceived him by the feigned account of Lady Blessingham’s death, but as he could not assign any reason for his warning admonition against admitting her into the family, Katheren refused to abandon her.

“When settled in the retreat which you pro-



cured for me, I felt something like security, something like returning peace. Hope however was soon extinguished; the infirmities of the Earl, his estrangement from the world, the monastic seclusion of Miss St. Elmour, disappointed the expectation, that chance would introduce my nieces to their mother's relatives; while the fatal resemblance of Katheren to her aunt, shut from me every prospect of succeeding in my project. I knew that Beatrice Sorenzo was disliked, but I knew not that she was detested; even the advantage that might have been derived from the singular casualty which at first promised much, by drawing the sisters within the walls of Dunane, was frustrated by the simple sound of the name of, Beatrice. To you alone I have lately looked for assistance, but alas, even you, I begin to apprehend, are influenced by the calumnies of the Countess, to withdraw from me your protection; once, driven to despair by the protracted absence of Katheren, I imagined you had been induced by Lady Blessingham to separate her from one, whom she represents as a sullied and guilty woman.

“ My impatient son, weary of procrastination, left his guardian, and arrived at Killarney a few weeks since; he encountered his cousin Beatrice at Muéruss, even before he reached the cottage. I lament the hopelessness of his attachment, while I confess it has been productive of the most salutary

influence on his character. Dazzled by the specious and brilliant theories of our modern philosophers, with some of whom he had become acquainted at Paris, he had imbibed pernicious prejudices, if not baleful principles; the certainty of his sad dereliction, to which a hint from his guardian, and the keen reproof of Mornington, had awakened my attention, was a consummation of misery. Acquainted, however, through me, with the piety of Beatrice, with the purity of her principles, and the elevation of her sentiments, assured of the horror which she feels at the very shadow of scepticism, he turns from those delusive lights, and seeks that pure philosophy in which alone is truth.

Such Doctor Elwin is the story of the errors and sorrows of one early acquainted with grief. I rest all my earthly hopes upon your sentence."

## CHAPTER XIII.

Does consolation guide you hither? speak!  
Does condemnation?—Bid my bruised heart break!

THE manuscript was concluded, but the doctor still held it, still kept his eyes steadily fixed on words that no longer reached his understanding; perception was engrossed by mental images, the tumult of his ideas mocking his outward immobility. At length thought became fixed upon one singular incident of his past life, on which he dwelt for a time, with intense pondering, then, combining with it the recollection of some passages of the manuscript, they together presented a stupendous proof of treachery crowned with success, and daring guilt careering in the fruition of its most improbable expectancies. Indignation succeeded reflection. "So," he cried, "from her proud height she spits her deadly venom on my unfortunate friend, the impersonation of meek

suffering.—Yes, it is the will of heaven that she should meet her recompense hereafter! Of what avail would be exposure? Could it restore that persecuted woman to her place in society? Would it not rather aggravate her remorse for the romantic enthusiasm which had exalted this intriguer into Countess of Blessingham? Just Providence! she stood at the altar, she vowed fidelity to the high born victim of her perfidy, she who, but a few months before, had confessed her guilt to me!—to me, the witness of her hidden shame, the depository of her well kept secret! Wonderful woman! in whom the seeds of vice, with miraculous gradation, sprang, expanded, and flowered so briefly, into the fulness of iniquity.”

A loud knocking at the study door interrupted the doctor's soliloquy; he hastily unlocked it.

“I tapped with my tips first,” said Priscy, “but was forced to turn to my knuckles; there's tragedy folk here, to be sure,” she muttered, glancing around; “well, to think of one man making all that rattock! talk of women indeed!—Lauk Sir, is it to frump my mistress that you stand there, still as a stop watch? You know how frampled she is when a body keep dinner waiting.”

“Dinner!”

“The clock's right as a die,” said Priscy, observing the direction of his eyes, and replying to his look of wonder.

The party, which consisted merely of the family, Morgan, and the Miss Morningtons, now descended the stairs, and were followed by the doctor into the dining-room. With the exception of Katheren and George, all seemed disposed to taciturnity. Mrs. Elwin was, alternately, stately and fidgetty, evidently discomposed by her husband's breach of etiquette, now anxiously watching Patrick's arrangement of the dishes; now observing the disposal of the dessert; Lucy was grave, Emma pensive, Beatrice melancholy, the doctor abstracted and Morgan observant; but Katheren's heart was light, her flashing pleasantry irresistible; each countenance softened into something like a smile as she supported George's sallies with brilliant gaiety, and parried his gallant effusions with playful wit.

Morgan was seated near Emma, to whom his attentions were exclusively devoted; she received them gratefully, and thanked him by an expressive glance, as he bent forward to conceal her emotion at the sound of Moreland's name.

"Sir Henry Moreland will soon return, will he not, Doctor Elwin?" enquired Katheren, glancing a little angrily at Morgan.

The doctor started; since the removal of dinner he had been buried in meditation.—"Yes," he replied, smiling archly on his interrogator, who blushed, without well knowing why, unless indeed

she could trace the cause to the penetrating and fixed gaze of Mr. Morgan, "I hope," continued Doctor Elwin, "his arrival will precede your departure, Morgan, I would wish to see you friends."

"Which is not at all probable," said Morgan gravely.

Katheren's color encreased: after a moment's suspense, forcing a smile, she said, "Your reply to Doctor Elwin was obscure as oracular response, Mr. Morgan." The person she addressed, seemed not in the least inclined to explain the ambiguity of his speech in which, however, the open hearted doctor perceived no evasion, for he instantly launched forth into a warm panegyric on the young haronet, winding up, by appealing for the truth of his eulogium to Katheren.

"Miss Mornington," said Mrs. Elwin, sarcastically, "is a prejudiced witness."

"No, no," interrupted Katheren, warmly, "I give the testimony of candour and of justice; the merit of Sir Henry Moreland requires no varnish of partiality; those who have known him longer, can certainly better attest his worth, can better appreciate that singleness of heart on which Doctor Elwin has just expatiated, but even I can vouch for his probity, his generosity and honor."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the doctor. Morgan seemed confounded.

"Miss Mornington," said George, "will you write my epitaph?"

"Should I grant your request," replied Katheren, laughing, "your friends may mutter and your foes applaud."

"Emmar," said Mrs. Elwin, rising abruptly, "you must rehearse a little with Mr. Morgan; the Jeffersons, I know, will tease you to sing. She turned apprehensively to Katheren.—"You never condescend to the harpsichord Miss Mornington, do you? The Jeffersons have neither harp nor pianor."

"You spend the evening at Mrs. Jeffersons, Ellen?" said Doctor Elwin, as his wife was leading the way from the dining-room; "pray make my excuses."

"I beg you will take a chaise, Doctor Elwin, if you are going to the castle; we shall want the carriage early; the Jeffersons never give more than a dry drum."

Beatrice and Katheren exchanged looks of perplexity at this, to them, singular designation for a *conversazione*, but before they had been a week at the doctor's mansion, they were perfectly initiated into the mysteries of Hibernian meetings, in the novelty of which they found, for a time, more amusement than they had expected.

We turn to the sad occupant of the cottage, to

the unfortunate Miriam Mornington. She sat in her lonely chamber, unconscious of the passing hours, a prey to the bitterness of retrospection, which, leading her through all the varied misery of her past life, to the present moment, left her to the anguish of uncertainty. The shades of evening, deepening the gloom of her solitary apartment, nourished her despondency; she wept, but tears brought no relief; she meditated, but reflection suggested no remedy. Mrs. Susan had urged, vainly, an humble request that her lady would take some refreshment. A silent look of thanks, with an expressive gesture, dismissed the sympathising dame. At length the sound of approaching wheels suggested the necessity of resolution; a carriage stopped, and Susan appeared; to announce a visit from Doctor Elwin. Scarcely knowing how she reached the room, Mrs. Jermyn found herself before the person who was to pronounce her fiat.

"Madam," said Doctor Elwin, bowing profoundly, "if in future I address you thus ceremoniously, it will be because to my previous respect is now added reverence for your virtues and admiration for the heroism which has supported you through such unmerited misfortunes."

The fulness of satisfaction is sometimes more oppressive than disappointment. Mrs. Jermyn burst into tears, which her prudent friend did not



attempt to restrain; he awaited patiently till returning tranquillity should permit dispassionate consultation on those arrangements which he judged necessary, to meet future contingencies. "I waive for the present, my dear Madam," he resumed, perceiving Mrs. Jermyn's emotion had subsided, "all comments on your interesting story, except such as may tend to influence our decision; you were right in concluding that I had seen the extraordinary woman whom your ward so surprisingly resembles, and it is singular, though easily accounted for by the illness of the Countess, that excepting to myself, Mr. Karwin, and the inmates and immediate dependents of the castle, the 'beautiful Italian'—thus we distinguish Beatrice Sorenzo—was known only by report. The part she performs in your narrative is so singular, that those unacquainted with her, and with you, might doubt the truth of your portraiture, and think your tints unnatural, but to me the fidelity of your coloring is unquestionable; it confirms the judgment I had formed of the character of Beatrice."

"My suspicion was then correct," said Mrs. Jermyn, "that her duplicity caused the horrid catastrophe which involved the destruction of those unfortunate young men."

"It sent the one to Heaven," said Doctor Elwin, vehemently, "it made the other forfeit—"

He stopped and paced the room in great agitation. "Mrs. Jermyrn," he resumed, "Charles St. Elmour was my dearest friend; I loved him for his very faults; they were the consequence of cold blooded tyranny operating on an unyielding spirit. I pitied him. His sister, Mary St. Elmour, was the object of my boyish idolatry, but I never breathed my presumptuous attachment, and I soon perceived that every wish, hope, feeling, of her pure mind, were centred in her cousin Conwaye." The doctor paused; Mrs. Jermyrn listened with fixed attention. — "Miss St. Elmour was two years older than her cousin, and perhaps the reverence with which he had always looked up to her judgment, prevented his feeling for her a more tender, though less flattering sentiment; yet, I am persuaded, admiration and respect would have soon warmed into affection, but for his unfortunate expedition to the Continent. The Earl and Countess saw in the mild virtues, steady attachment, and domestic habits of Mary St. Elmour, the best safeguard for the son they idolized: his health was precarious; apprehension made the Countess superstitious; she thought his early virtues presaged an early tomb, and could only be comforted by the consolatory arguments of her niece. Poor Lady Mary saw a gleam of hope in the prospects of her daughter, but all was soon clouded. Lord Conwaye returned, and confessed his passion for

Beatrice. From that moment the fine calm countenance of Mary St. Elmour was changed in its expression; she never uttered a complaint, but her brow soon wore the stamp of years. The Earl was, at first, inexorable, and even the Countess deaf to her son's entreaties, but Mary knelt, supplicated, remonstrated, at length won unwilling acquiescence to this hated union, and while Lord Conwaye imagined his cousin unfeeling, and indifferent to his misery, this magnanimous woman, silencing every selfish feeling, was, in secret, his steady and successful advocate.—What a trial was hers!

“Beatrice came, but not all her beauty, not all her fascination, could subdue the freezing formality of her uncle. The Countess was declining fast; I was consequently a constant visitor at the castle, and soon became the confidant of St. Elmour's secret passion; I pitied, and, had I dared, would have blamed his infatuation, but his love partook of insanity; he could see nothing artificial in the conduct of Beatrice; my hints were either ridiculed or resented, and at length he succeeded in persuading me that terror alone prevented her openly avowing her indifference to Lord Conwaye and her attachment to himself. She feared the vengeance of her uncle, she would fly with Charles, but she never would encounter the indignation of her relatives. Such were her

professions to one cousin, while to the other ———. But it is unnecessary to dwell on her duplicity— all was arranged for her flight with St. Elmour, when that fatal catastrophe, the fruit of mad jealousy or insidious suggestion, occurred in Helen's cottage— Imagine, Mrs. Jermyn, the agony of Miss St. Elmour—the man she loved murdered by her brother—that idolized brother a hunted fugitive! She heard the wild shriek which closed the life of the Countess, she witnessed the despair of her mother, the frenzied grief and the vindictive fury of her uncle. The most unfortunate, because the most guilty of this unhappy family, fled; he sought in my house an asylum.—Shall I ever forget that dreadful night!—wretched man! he was discovered and imprisoned. The next plot was more successful; the actors in the stratagem were steady and faithful, yet all our efforts were nearly frustrated by his infatuation for that being who had ruined him. The ready invention of his foster-mother saved his life; he was told that Beatrice had expired in ———, but why wound your ears with a tale of falsehood and guilt?—he escaped.”

“And perished at sea?” added Mrs. Jermyn, earnestly.

“The vessel was certainly lost,” continued Doctor Elwin, “but ——— however this is irrelevant to my story. I must vindicate Lady Mary

from the aspersion of cruelty so falsely thrown on her by Beatrice; even amidst anguish which might have well excused forgetfulness, she wrote to request I would shelter the unhappy girl, but no entreaties could induce Beatrice to leave the cottage. For some time I attributed her obstinacy to terror and despair, but at length the disgraceful truth became evident." Doctor Elwin looked at Mrs. Jermyn, as if wishing to convey by a glance a meaning which he chose not to utter, but she seemed absorbed by his narrative, and he continued.—"Even then I was cheated by her well feigned remorse; she remained more than three months at Ileen's cottage, playing the part of a Magdalen, and it was not until her heartless departure, with Sir Philip Mornington, on the very day St. Elmour escaped, that I became thoroughly acquainted with her wonderful hypocrisy, her cool, calculating, selfish inhumanity. She left no letter, no memento, no trace, but vanished like the destroying angel when its deadly mission was fulfilled."

"And she remained more than three months in an humble cottage," said Mrs. Jermyn, thoughtfully, "a burden on the kindness of a helpless woman, when she knew how fondly my mother would have welcomed her! Surely Sir, the anguish must have been intense as she described it that prevented her forwarding instantly that

letter which we received three months after date."

"And did she ascribe the very acme of deceit to grief?" said Doctor Elwin, indignantly; "she dared not return to her friends; there was a cause Madam, a most disgraceful cause.—Your pardon Mrs. Jermyn; I did not mean to be so violent—I would not wound delicacy, nor yet palter with truth.—We are too apt to combine guilt with mystery; in this instance me may."

Mrs. Jermyn started; a shocking suspicion flashed at once across her mind; Doctor Elwin, perceiving he was at length understood, and unwilling to notice her emotion, resumed—"Beatrice had mentioned more than once the name of Mornington, but, in a lapse of three-and-twenty years, I had nearly forgotten it; the face of Katheren, however, instantly recalled circumstances too marked and too terrible to be buried in oblivion; I would, if possible, have banished from my mind the painful surmise of her affinity to Beatrice Sorenzo; I watched Karwin's countenance when he was introduced to her, and perceived he had formed the same suspicion. Still I would have ascribed this marvellous resemblance to chance, but Karwin informed me that about a year since, an effort had been made to propitiate the Earl of Dunane, and to obtain his protection for two orphans, who were represented as his

grand-nieces, the lady who applied calling herself the aunt of those children. He had no doubt, he said, that you were that person, and, in reality, Katheren Sorenzo; yourself, or your sister Beatrice, their mother. I need not recapitulate the calumnies which succeeded; it required little penetration to perceive that Karwin was no friend to the orphan sisters, no advocate for them with their uncle. You are acquainted with my fruitless attempt to take advantage of the accident which led Beatrice to the Earl's apartment; the subsequent efforts of Miss St. Elmour to soften her uncle were defeated by Karwin, who, alone, could have been the retailer of the injurious reports that were circulated concerning you."

"But how," enquired Mrs. Jermyn, "could I have provoked the malice of a person I never beheld?"

"By advocating the cause of those who, he supposes, may interfere with his interests: he, also, once loved Mary St. Elmour, but not silently; his presumption met from Charles the return it deserved. Bitter enmity was the consequence. Nevertheless I have reason to believe he still preserves ridiculous hopes. The Earl cannot live many days; the family estates devolve to Miss St. Elmour, her brother's outlawry cuts him off, and you are aware that your nieces, being only the descendants of the Earl's half sister, cannot inherit."

"When I sought to interest the Earl of Dunane for my wards," said Mrs. Jermyn, "his wealth was not even thought of."

"That I can easily credit, Madam, but the selfish and designing imagine secret and sordid motives to be the mainspring of every action, and measure by their own, their neighbour's disinterestedness. Karwin has acquired unbounded influence over the Earl, whom he guides at pleasure; I have no hope in that quarter, but I have the surest, the steadiest in another. Mary St. Elmour will prove a firm friend; she is already interested for her young relatives, and, singular as it may seem, Katheren is particularly her favorite. This exalted woman, never influenced by common prejudices, sees only an additional motive for kindness in the fatal resemblance which, were the Earl's existence prolonged to eternity, would for ever preclude his innocent niece from appearing in his presence. The power of Karwin will cease with the life of his patron, though such is not his absurd expectation.—Mean worldly being!" added the doctor, in an under tone, "how different from his brother!"

"You would advise then my awaiting the event?" said Mrs. Jermyn.

"Undoubtedly, but without mystery, without a separation which—forgive me Madam—originated in overstrained refinement. Perfectly in-



artificial, you have been terrified into subterfuge; simplicity has stooped to subtlety, ingenuousness to artifice; and for what? You have indeed weakly worn the guise which Beatrice spins for you. Discard it—acknowledge your child; do not destroy his happiness by fastidious delicacy. When the heart is deeply interested, there is too much sentiment for cool reasoning; your friend Sir Charles Egerton stood in this predicament, your friend Doctor Elwin does not. I have passed the age of romance; you have won my admiration, you have gained my warm friendship, but you have not subjugated my reason. I cannot approve of the romantic heroism which would sacrifice substantial good to a bubble—what has Lady Blessingham threatened that she has not already performed? and as to the world, have you not sufficiently experienced the fallacy of its judgment?—Why then, longer, embitter your existence by useless efforts to thwart what I conceive to be the will of Heaven? You start, you wonder whither all this preamble tends—thus far.—If Beatrice Mornington love your son, if he become worthy of her, his mother should not oppose their union.”

Mrs. Jermyn would have spoken, but surprise and agitation prevented her.

“My dear Madam,” resumed Doctor Elwin, “I will not urge this matter now; both are, at pre-

sent, too young to marry; there is ample time for consideration; dissuade your son from the quixotic resignation of his property.—Be advised by me; remain in your present residence; wait patiently till Heaven work its will; Lady Blessingham dares not pursue you hither with defiance; if she approach you here, arrogance must sink into submission; the rod I wield will speedily effect this miracle. My family and your wards shall be made acquainted, by me, with as much of your narrative as may be necessary for them to learn; I will avoid all particulars; you shall be introduced to our society, (if indeed you will deign to join it,) as the daughter of Sir Philip Mornington, the mother of Edward Jermyn. Prudential motives, unnecessary to be divulged, had prevented your permitting your son to reside with you while your nieces remained under your protection; all this is simple, and strictly true. My young friends may, at first, wonder at the secrecy you have hitherto observed respecting their cousin, but you are not now to learn their conviction that rectitude guides all your actions; hereafter you can impart at leisure, should circumstances require it, those particulars which I perfectly agree with you in thinking it better, for the present, to suppress; we can account to them for the Earl's conduct, by merely mentioning the unfortunate connexion of

Lady Katherine Conway; they will be satisfied to remain under my protection, visiting you occasionally, until we can dispose of that unruly Edward, with whom, I suspect, I am already acquainted. This latter (assured that his passion for Beatrice will meet no opposition) we shall easily mould to our wishes, and, with your concurrence, I will propose to him a probation of three or four years as the test of his attachment, and of the sincerity of his orthodoxy. You perceive I duly estimate the value of Beatrice Mornington. Lady Blessingham, (informed by her emissary Pauline of the friends you have acquired,) will no longer disturb you; I have not the least doubt that she placed this spy in your family for some sinister purpose; her artifice, however, has been foiled by the spirited and prompt determination of Katherine. Pauline would have been a glorious coadjutor in spinning a tale of calumny; you may now smile at such futile efforts to harm you—it is a proud but an honest boast, that my testimony, here, will outweigh even Lady Blessingham's. You see, my dear Madam, I have almost exhausted my breath; lest you should find opening for interruption before I had submitted to you the whole of my well digested plans; you must not attempt to decide on them at present; I would not risk the possibility of your dissent. No doubt you are startled at opinions which oppose all your

preconceived arrangements, all your generous but—forgive me Madam—your too romantic sacrifices. Remember that works of supererogation are not required; a few days will probably determine whether my judgment of Miss St. Elmour be correct; to her, only, will I communicate your entire narrative. Shall we postpone our decision until then?”

“I am incapable at present,” faltered Mrs. Jermyn; “my heart is too grateful, too——”

“Then we will waive this matter,” interrupted Doctor Elwin, hastily; “I would owe all to reflection, nothing to gratitude.—Would you thank me for the selfishness which seeks to monopolize three such rare and brilliant gems?—Now for your son.”

“Edward has left me,” said Mrs. Jermyn; “we were alarmed some days since by distressing accounts of Sir Charles Egerton’s health; my son required no suggestion of mine to determine his proceeding immediately to Northumberland; we had arranged that he should join me at La Motte.”

“I predict he will one day, in gown and cassock, thank me for upsetting this plan,” said Doctor Elwin, smiling; “you observe, my dear Madam, I am saucy and sanguine—Farewell.—A painful duty will prevent my seeing you to-morrow.—Alas! Mrs. Jermyn, where misfortune

is followed by alienation of mind it is indeed horrible to witness! I can remember when the proudest dames might have envied the talents, spirit and beauty of poor Ileen Sullivan!"

"You have then discovered that wretched maniac? but my Katheren, Doctor Elwin."

"Be under no apprehension for Katheren; I have placed her under the guardianship of two watchful dragons. Ileen's delusion is not incurable, she may yet be undeceived."

The doctor was retreating; Mrs. Jermyn caught his hand.—"Oh Sir! one word, one blessing; for twenty years I have sought my pillow with an aching heart!—to-night thanks to your —."

"To-night," interrupted Doctor Elwin, "a halo of hope shall surround you.—Here's a riotous pulse," he continued, kindly taking her hand; "I prescribe sound sleep and cheering dreams, which, remember, are not to be won by wearying rumination; to-morrow you may cogitate at will, but not to-night, not to-night."

## CHAPTER XIV.

Fair scenes, where motley fancy shadow'd forth  
 The incidents of long gone years, farewell!  
 Impassioned, of capricious birth,  
 Bids me in other climes resume the tale

Which, haply, may from musings, sad beguile  
 Some spirit sorrowing, oppress'd, indignant;  
 Or, by the legend caught, may lure awhile  
 To charity, the vengeful, the malignant.

"Well here's a fuss and a fluster!" quoth Priscy, as she moulded the covering of a goose pie, in her private pantry; "pie-nies by day and parties by night!" "Running the candle out of the binnacle," as Master George says, 'keepin' nothin' to pay the piper, in case of sickness or other mishap.'—To be sure nothin' comes o' nothin'; without ganders we can't have goose pies, without men we can't have marriages. But a poor parson's son is no great haul when the thing's done, and Patrick says that same isn't as sure as fire fries, for he often catches *pater-noster* lookin' uncommon queer at Miss Katheren. My master,

poor daisy lamb!—I'd turn his pocket out any day, without his crying stop thief!—To think of his fetching the heiresses here to cut out his own flesh!—Crimany! how dashed I was when Jude walked into the kitchen, fagged out so fine.—‘Come to wait on my misthis, Mrs. Crampet,’ says she, with her head like Tim Grimes’ on Tralee Gaol, stiff and shinin’. ‘Send her off with a fly in her eye,’ whispered cook, but I wouldn’t disparage myself by no such conduct, and to say the truth of Jude, she don’t want gumpston, and an’t had at a pinch.—‘If we can but hold our noses to windward,’ as Master George says, I’m content.”

Such were the reflections and annotations of Priscy on what she concurred with her mistress in considering a profuse expenditure, to which the doctor’s income was inadequate, but as Mrs. Elwin had, also, sapiently observed that—“To be sure, nothing came of nothing,” the corollary was, that something would engender something. Moreover, George was to be gratified, and by this last suggestion Mrs. Elwin succeeded in convincing her efficient and unceremonious, but also zealous and attached domestic, of the expediency of straining a point, to humour her son, and, if possible, dispose of her daughters. Both mistress and maid agreed in condemning the impolitic hospitality which had admitted such inmates as the Miss Morningtons,

for Mrs. Elwin, as well as Patrick, had detected the eyes of Morgan, often fixed on Katheren, with ambiguous expression, which might have been variously translated according to the mood of the interpreter. For some time Morgan was considered by Mrs. Elwin as *nobody*, but she had been lately induced, by her eldest daughter's persuasions, to think more favorably of her guest, and one morning observed to Lucy, with a sigh, that as Moreland was now quite out of the question, Emma might as well think seriously of Morgan, "who may, from his cleverness," she added, "turn up something." But his value increased threefold, when the probability occurred of losing him. "To be outwitted twice by Katheren Mornington," she declared "was too *unlucky*." Her daughter vainly endeavoured to allay her mortification, by suggesting the impossibility of Katheren's marrying both admirers.—"Neither am I," added Lucy, "at all convinced of Mr. Morgan's partiality for Miss Mornington."

A week wore away without operating any change in the sentiments of Mrs. Elwin and her daughters towards Katheren; Lucy was polite but formal, Emma reserved, and their mother distant. Doctor Elwin, detained almost entirely at the castle, by the decline of the Earl, seldom saw his family, and George, alone, supplied his father's place. But for the latter, Katheren, in confidence



to Beatrice, confessed that this visit would have proved even, irksome; she complained chiefly of Mr. Morgan, and Beatrice noticed, with secret astonishment, that her sister, who had resented, so indignantly, what she had termed the presumption of young Edwards, submitted patiently to the more unwarrantable scrutiny of a person who never sought by the slightest attention to atone for his cynical observation. Katheren had been, hitherto, always prompt to repel rudeness and resent the most trifling deviation from that respect which she, even tenaciously, exacted, except from the poor and humble; she could tolerate the freedom of the untaught peasant, but she would haughtily check arrogant familiarity, and would proudly profess her indifference to neglect. In the present instance however her inherent pride seemed controlled by some more powerful sentiment. She was contented with complaining to Beatrice of that reserve, which heretofore she would have resented or despised, while, her high spirit sometimes resuming the mastery, in the one mood she would, secretly, deprecate, in the other determine to retort the inferred disdain of Mr. Morgan. Beatrice, however, unconscious of this alternation in Katheren's humour, ascribed her forbearance to a generous desire of atoning for unfounded prejudice; she had overheard Miss Elwin, when conversing with Morgan, mention

her sister's name with asperity, and even her meek spirit rose against this seeming injustice. Between Lucy and Katheren indeed mutual distrust seemed to prevail; as if each were conscious of some repulsive attribute in the other, they kept without the sphere of annoyance. Had Miss Elwin cause for this pique?—Did Katheren's avoidance proceed from remorse or resentment?—Beatrice feared to enquire.

The conduct of Morgan presented another problem. In Katheren's absence, enthusiasm was a cold term to express the manner of his praise; he would dilate on her genius, her talents, with all the eloquence of inspiration,—in her presence, apparently regardless, her most brilliant efforts could not win from him even attention, and while all others of their little world bent before the shrine of the gifted heiress, the poor parson's son never deigned even an obeisance. Was it the difficulty of winning his commendation that made it so desirable, that caused Katheren's heart to flutter as she tremblingly sought a look of approval? Beatrice remarked a solicitude so novel and so surprising, but imputed even this singular humility to regret for former caprice; she could only wonder at the inflexibility which would not yield to such gentle propitiation. That Miss Elwin had prejudiced Morgan against Katheren, was evident,—but did dislike ever produce interest, the deep

interest which this inexplicable young man manifested? Beatrice, with others, had detected those stolen glances which, to her, were extraordinary only from their contradictory expression, now fraught with admiration, now with pity, now with reproof. Were looks alone to be consulted, she would have beheld in Mr. Morgan, alternately the idolator, mentor, critic and censor of her sister; while to herself this accomplished young man was ever equable, to Katheren his manner was inconsistent, his conduct, at times, repulsive. He would vituperate with cutting acrimony, vanity, coquetry and artifice; his countenance would flush with indignation and lengthen into sternness, as he animadverted on the perversion of brilliant endowments, and while his hearers would wonder at, and look for, the cause or the object of his caustic asperity, a keen sarcastic glance would point the shaft to Katheren.

Emma alone, the patient, suffering Emma, was unobservant of conduct which was canvassed and commented on, by almost every other individual of the little circle; though listless as hopeless, she would have been awakened to exertion in the cause of Katheren, had she perceived the slights to which her admired though envied companion was condemned; but enduring, not enjoying existence, she had, at length, fallen into the languor of inanity; often abstracted, never observant, the

once generous, single-hearted Emma, was now passively subservient or weakly credulous, content with that dreamy lethargy which precludes pain.

George anxiously watched his favourite sister, but endeavoured to believe his apprehensions of her disappointment and her danger alike imaginary. Still some suspicion of the cause which had thus early destroyed her bloom would importunately recur. He determined to be vigilant and cautious, not to distress Emma by enquiries, but if once satisfied of the truth of his surmise, to call Moreland to a severe account.

Notwithstanding the pic-nics and parties on which Priscy had so feelingly descanted, Beatrix and Katheren already wished for their quiet retirement, and the society of their monitress; but they discovered no corresponding inclination in Mrs. Jermyn; their musical instruments, drawing apparatus, etc., had been removed to Doctor Elwin's; they grieved, but did not murmur; Katheren, indeed, loudly expressed her surprise at such unforeseen arrangements, and both sisters impatiently looked to Doctor Elwin for explanation, but the latter appeared too thoughtful to be interrogated.

One morning he entered the drawing-room where his family and guests were assembled, his

countenance wearing its usual benign expression. Katheren, who had just been the object of a sly sarcasm from Lucy Elwin, looked at her always indulgent and partial advocate, a delighted welcome.

"Have you anticipated my information, young enslaver?" said the doctor, approaching his favorite, "that you thus wear such additional lustre. —What gems can sparkle like those saucy eyes?"

"They but reflect the brightness of yours," said Katheren, laughing; "to-day you have dried some tear of lamentable distress, or have discovered some demoiselle in dragon durance, whose wrongs you are about to redress."

"Excellently divined, except that it is the dragon, not the damsel who implores my assistance; though it be contrary to all chivalry to grant it, nevertheless I am tempted — if you consent."

"With perfect reliance on Doctor Elwin's equity and prowess, I do consent."

"Without the aid of Miss Katheren Mornington, Doctor Elwin is, alas! powerless!"

"It is granted," said Katheren gaily.

"Unreservedly?"

"Unreservedly," she replied.

"Will you redeem your pledge with this?" said the doctor, taking her hand.

Katheren looked at him earnestly. — "Sir Henry Moreland is returned!" she exclaimed.

"Will you redeem your pledge with this?" repeated Doctor Elwin, emphatically.

"Certainly, if you continue to require it," said Katheren, coloring.

"I am quite satisfied," said the good man, "I knew you were superior to the littleness of coquetry; Henry Moreland is returned."

Katheren stole a glance at Emma, and breathed freely when she saw that all was right.

"I found this letter from him on my table," resumed the doctor, "it is not unusual with lovers' and ladies' epistles to find all the point in the postscript. I must prevent the retort threatened in that speaking look, by reading it.—'You will excuse my anxiety to see my old friends, Doctor Elwin, and pardon my early intrusion: I understand the Miss Morningtons are at present staying with you: have I permission to visit the ladies this morning?'—How wonderfully circumspect, civil and cautious, love makes hare-brained youth!" continued Doctor Elwin; "you may thank it, Ellen, for not having at this moment Master Harry dancing the hays with George on your blushing Kidderminster."

"Behold the man!" said George, looking from the window.

"Treading on the heels of his despatch!" rejoined the doctor.

An impatient knock was succeeded by the appearance of Patrick, who announced that Sir Henry Moreland was in the study, and requested to see Doctor Elwin and Miss Mornington. Beatrice half arose, but, abashed at her thoughtlessness, resumed her seat, and looked doubtingly at Katherine: one glance from the intelligent eye of her sister told her too, that all was right. Katherine stopped abruptly, and turned a face beaming with smiles and blushes towards Doctor Elwin.

"Your countenance will never assist you to dissemble, Katherine," said the doctor, fondly taking her hand; "come, I will be your escort." They left the room.

"Heartless, too truly!" muttered Morgan.

Emma was not pale, but ghastly; Lucy would have led her from the room, but the moment of retreat had escaped; her sister, unable to support herself, leaned back against the sofa, her eyes fixed, with a stupid glare, upon the door. George paced the apartment, with a countenance in which perturbation and anxiety were succeeded by a menacing frown, as he stopped before Emma and inquisitively surveyed her. Poor Mrs. Elwin, in all the panic of anticipated unlucky tidings, in all the perplexity of utter helplessness to ward off

their effect, mechanically arranged the chairs, smoothed the hearth rug, then seating herself, twirled her thumbs, and looked tearfully at her children. Beatrice alone was collected, for even Morgan had lost his usual self-command, and presented no expedient; he had ensconced himself in the recess, and, folding his arms, looked proudly indignant, as if already prepared for the *denouement*.

At length an aerial step was heard ascending the stairs; Emma started from her seat, as if stung into motion by torture.—“For the love of heaven Emma,” whispered Lucy, “think of George, summon resolution, be firm.” The poor girl heeded her not. Katheren rushed into the room, flung her arms round Emma’s neck, and sobbed hysterically.

“What means all this?” exclaimed Mrs. Elwin, her lip quivering as she viewed the agonized countenance of her child.

“Means,” repeated Katheren, smiles sparkling through tears, “it means that there is no interdict in Sir Patrick’s will to Sir Henry Moreland wedding—Emma Elwin!”

“My sister—for God’s sake water!” ejaculated George.

Poor Mrs. Elwin, scarcely knowing whether to laugh or cry, rang so violently that the bell rope fell prostrate on the Kidderminster.

“It is nothing Lucy, she will soon recover,”



said Katheren, supporting the fainting Emma, who slowly unclosed her heavy eyes, and fixed them with a doubtful expression on her sister, "it is no delusion," continued Katheren, "Sir Henry Moreland is now pleading his cause to one who was even more sceptical than you, dear Emma; your father has heard and approves his explanation. Your lover deserves a reward; you have been unjust to him Emma."

"But most unjust to you Miss Mornington," said Lucy.

"Hush!" cried Katheren, placing her finger on her lip, "I only receive private penitentials. When in cowl and sackcloth," she continued, with mock solemnity, "I shall decree most rigorous retribution to you, Lucy Elwin; mean-time I award the trifling penalty of silence."

"I always thought you an angel!" ejaculated George.

"Mistaken youth!" said Katheren, with air and gesture so irresistibly comic that even Emma smiled; "but here is one," she continued, "who will deify me in good earnest, if I do not prevent my apotheosis by flight." She slid from Emma's embrace; playfully kissed her hand to the admiring group, and disappeared, as Sir Henry Moreland entered.

To Emma explanation and protestation were alike unnecessary; her lover, unconscious or

heedless of the presence of a stranger, was at her feet. Before however he had poured forth half his incoherent raptures, he started from his kneeling posture, to shake hands with George, embrace Lucy, bow to Beatrice, and beg Mrs. Elwin's pardon for upsetting the backgammon box.

But Mrs. Elwin was herself so completely upset with ecstacy, that even her own bodily overthrow would have been unheeded 'mid the effervescence of her exultation. She paced the room, vainly endeavouring to conceal under dignified stateliness that exuberance of delight which she thought derogatory to the embryo mother-in-law of a baronet; unconscious smiles dimpled her round fair face; she looked from her feet to the ceiling, from the ceiling to her feet, with most intense complacency; at length, making a full stop directly in front of Morgan, and entirely unaware that she either stood, stared, or spoke, she burst forth—"What, in the name of wonder, will the Jefferson's say?"

The person apparently interrogated seemed buried in too profound a reverie to be capable of resolving so doughty a point; he looked at the lady, the lady at him, but in the eyes of either it was impossible to discover a single ray of meaning. George gazed at the bewildered pair, expecting some sublime explosion, but when he perceived both remain silent, staring and stock still,

lost in the clouds of retrospection or anticipation, his delight and admiration became so obstreperous, that, to allay its intoxicating ferment, he kissed his mother and kicked the Kidderminster:

"Apropos of that babbling idiot, Miss Jefferson," exclaimed Moreland, anxious to disperse the storm which was gathering on the brow of the awestruck and amazed Mrs. Elwin, "I have to thank her supple tongue for half my sufferings." He hesitated. 'You may speak out,' whispered Mrs. Elwin, observing his enquiring glance; 'tis only a friend of George's, quite one of the family.'—Moreland continued.—"It was her officious hints to my aunt, Lady Moreland, which first irritated my poor proud uncle; my visits here were interdicted; I was too headstrong or too much in love to bend, yet I became more cautious in my conduct towards Emma, particularly when in company with that communicative gadfly; this change was misconstrued, imputed to caprice or inconstancy."—Moreland looked at the conscience stricken Lucy.—"I was angry; the very height of fatuity could alone have excused the weakness of which I was suspected; humbly to admire was the whole of my presumption; my proudest boast, Miss Mernington's friendship, is a proof of my innocence; had I aspired to more, I should have smarted under her deserved disdain."

The beautiful countenance of Beatrice wore an

air of placid triumph. Morgan fixed on the speaker, eyes no longer devoid of intelligence.

Moreland proceeded:—"Mean-time, my visits here continued; my uncle threatened, Lady Moreland expostulated, my mother wept. I could have borne all save the last; to destroy my poor widowed parent's fond certainties, to see that eye dimmed by disappointment which was before bright with confidence—Emma would you have prized such selfish attachment?—I was too well aware of Doctor Elwin's integrity to risk my little remaining hope by making him arbitrate between my happiness and my exaltation; I dared not reveal my misery to Emma; I was harassed, perplexed, irritated; Emma cold, Lucy sarcastic, even Miss Mornington reserved. I grew distracted, and thought very seriously of throwing myself into the lake."

"How horrid!" murmured Mrs. Elwin.

"You may smile George," continued Moreland, "but there never was so miserable a devil!—We met at Mucruss; Miss Mornington, provoked by that fool Jefferson, avoided me.—I could have annihilated him, myself, the whole world! Difficulties sometimes clear a man's intellect, and precipitation saves, when cool meditation might perhaps plunge one still deeper in dilemma. I drew Miss Mornington from her party, and made a full confession. In the reviving confidence ex-

pressed by her animated countenance, I read the success of sincerity in winning back her favor at least; she pleaded for all; for Emma, for my mother, for myself; there was no security, she said, save in flight; it might prevent the execution of my uncle's threat of leaving a lasting interdiction to my union with Emma; by this sacrifice he might be won to forbearance, might recall me, and relent; she commended my firmness in not fettering Emma by any engagement, and exhorted me to steadiness in the determination never to afflict my mother; the event has justified her discernment and discretion."

"The latter quality was, however, severely tried," said Beatrice, smiling; "your secret would certainly have been betrayed, had Katheren been permitted to see Emma, during her illness; her remorse, I perceive, proceeded from her having advised your separation."

"Exalted creature!" exclaimed Lucy Elwin.

"Were Katheren present, Miss Elwin," said Beatrice, "she would think such praise extravagant and unmerited; but you are not acquainted with her who has made my sister what she is."

"Can hypocrisy have won such homage?" exclaimed Morgan, emerging abruptly from the place of his retreat.

"Sir!" said the surprised and somewhat terrified Beatrice.

"Bless me!" cried George, "how remiss I have been.—Sir Henry Moreland—Mr. Morgan."

"Son of the Reverend Mr. Morgan of Wales," added Mrs. Elwin, consequentially, "an artist, a musician, and a scientific poet." As the lady pronounced this pompous eulogy, she looked at the young men, hoping to establish the superiority on the side of Moreland, but nothing could surpass the graceful ease of the parson's son.—"What a pity," pursued Mrs. Elwin, "what a pity Mr. Morgan you are not in orders! you might else have officiated at the nuptials—but you may yet be in time."

This speech drove Emma from the room, while George, setting all sermonising at defiance, gave vent to his smothered glee; his cachination at last became so sympathetic, that Moreland joined in the mirth, without well knowing why, and even Morgan smiled.

"More joy, and long life to yez! sure 'tis skippin' on a thread, like the fairies, ourself could be to hear yez," said a voice on the landing. Mrs. Elwin flung open the door.—It was Judith helping Priscy to lay down the best stair carpet. "Priscillar," said Mrs. Elwin, heaving a deep drawn sigh of profound satisfaction, "you may send Patrick to put up the bell rope."

## LETTER I.

[Katheren, Countess of Blessingham, to Beatrice  
Mornington.]

Blessingham Castle, Devonshire.

My sister, my dear sister, are we in reality separated by a distance which, measured with the eye of affection, seems appalling?—Do I dream, or have I indeed consented to relinquish all my former sweet endearing ties, for a stranger?—How powerful, how engrossing must that sentiment be, which has surpassed even my love for Beatrice!—Is it possible that a few short weeks have given birth to it?—Is it possible that I have voluntarily transferred the authority which my beloved guardian so gently exercised?—That I have vowed to another the obedience which was so fondly given to her?—How shall I henceforth reckon on stability?—Often have I proudly vaunted my determination never to be separated from her, and yet I have yielded to the blandishments of love, to the allurements of ambition.—I have quitted my protectress, almost without her consent, certainly without her approbation.—Beatrice! would temptation have found you thus feeble?—No!—You

would have shrunk from bonds which sever the links of duty and gratitude.—You would not have permitted a sentiment of yesterday to triumph over the attachment of years; nevertheless, my sister, even in the fulness of your self approval, you must have confessed sorrow for such a sacrifice.—But why is this cruel separation pronounced unavoidable?—What strange mysterious cause disunites two persons to whom we acknowledge equal kindred?—Why have we, hitherto, been kept ignorant even of the existence of the mother of my husband?—Why does the tie which binds me still closer to my maternal aunt, sever me for ever from my father's sister,—perhaps from my own? The events of the last few weeks have been so extraordinary, so unexpected and agitating, that my mind still seems a chaos of indefinite and contradictory feelings, which I can neither arrange, examine, nor controul,—the power of reasoning seems lost, nor can I yet determine whether this new and sacred tie, so suddenly formed, will compensate for that light and cherished chain which bound me to my sister and my guardian. Even while I prove the charm of one dear sentiment, I start from the illusion which almost cheats me into the belief that my bliss is perfect, awakened by that powerful Magician, at whose touch the mind's eye views forsaken friends, the heart remorseful feels for broken promises. — Perhaps,



could I commune with you my sister, retrace the past, examine those motives which induced my conduct, I might discover that some less revolting principle than selfishness had governed me.—Alas! written cannot supply the place of oral communication, where apprehension scans the changing countenance and reads sympathy at least, if not approval, in the pitying eye! But cold and studied characters must now succeed the speaking glance, the prompt effusion, must now alone interpret between me and Beatrice!—You remember our last conference, in Doctor Elwin's study, on the morning we were summoned thither by our kind friend to hear that strange disclosure which forms an era in our little history.—Relatives of whose existence we were entirely ignorant—a mother's only sister—her son.—Again, a cousin in that young stranger whose consanguinity so well excused his freedom! Beatrice, did you not feel with me, that the motive which Doctor Elwin assigned for such concealment, was inadequate?—A woman like my aunt Miriam, so entirely above the paltry prejudices and petty irritations of weaker minds, influenced by a trifling disagreement to break off all connexion with my mother's family! it was impossible! You remember I expressed my wonder, and was proceeding with enquiries, dictated by doubt and curiosity, when checked by Doctor Elwin's cold

rebuke. "Katheren, you were not wont to question your aunt's motives, to arraign her consistency; I have already said that all is not disclosed; when it is, you will approve and appreciate the delicacy of her forbearance."

This reproof from one so partial, left me confused and silent.—Our friend then spoke of the vindictive man whose dreadful denunciation, as he spurned my kneeling sister, seemed to strike my ear, when the unwelcome information of our affinity to the Dunane family was imparted,—again inquiry hovered on my lip,—what could have caused this deep antipathy? — Lady Katheren Conway's marriage with a foreigner?—And did that entail a curse upon her grandchildren?—I dared not however express my incredulity, but, endeavouring to catch your air of calm attention, I listened silently, as our friend described his unavailing efforts to win for us the forgiveness, the patronage of the Earl of Dunane!—forgiveness! in what had we offended?—patronage!—how my spirit rose!—I would not have won it by such intercession—the daughter of Sir Philip Mornington sue for patronage!—I would have permitted any mediation with Miss St. Elmour,—would have sought her friendship, with all the unassuming solicitude of Beatrice.—But the Earl I implore his support, win from him the boon of

acknowledgment! Methinks, when my maternal grandmother married the Count Sorenso, she did not derogate from the dignity even of an Earl's sister,—indignation would have burst into remonstrance; again I looked at you,—my spirit sank into submission.

When Doctor Elwin left us, the expression of my wonder was prevented by your singular address; the solemnity of your manner impressed me with awe, almost with terror; my previous discomposure was lost in apprehension at an exordium of which every word now starts to memory.—“Katheren,” you said, “we will not waste in idle discussion on mysteries which it becomes us not to dive into, these moments of undisturbed conference; I would employ them for your preservation, my sister; this expression is not too forcible; I would save you from the misery of remorse,—your agitation is a sufficient confession, —your countenance at once betrays your consciousness,—you cannot dissemble;—but you look impatient, and I will be brief. Talent, genius, elegance, elevation of sentiment, are all united in a person who may justly aspire to efface the inferiority of his birth by his brilliant endowments, and win for himself distinction 'spite of extrinsic circumstance.—Will you blast this goodly promise?—Will you torture a generous heart with the throb of disappointment?—Mr. Morgan may

writes sister, but he will never complain; his sensitive, perhaps fastidious delicacy, secures you from his reproof, but on your own heart, Katherine, the unerring touch of reason will strike—self-condemnation.—Does vanity light your countenance with smiles, deepen the glow of your cheek, when you receive the attentions, I had almost said the devotion of Mr. Morgan?—Do you not understand that to permit is to encourage?—And encourage what?—whom?—Hopes that you cannot mean to realise, a man whose presumption, though caused by yourself, will surely meet your proud resentment, should he dare anticipate your becoming the partner of his obscurity; your character, your sentiments, impress me with this conviction, but when is Mr. Morgan to be undeceived? When vanity shall have won its paltry triumph from modest worth?"

I listened to you, alternately sorrowful and resentful, stung by your reproaches and affected by your arguments, wishing but unable to palliate. You thought me obdurate, or obstinate—you left me—and yet, Beatrice, I made, at your remonstrance, a heartfelt sacrifice; that evening I returned to the cottage, leaving you at Doctor Elwin's.—Oh! who that has once felt the misery of humiliation, would again deserve its sting?—Terrified at the pang which shot through my heart, as Doctor Elwin handed me into the carri-

age, I tried to trace its cause to my separation from you, yet that I knew would be but transient. What then was it which sat like a baleful spell upon my spirit, shutting out hope, making smiles and mirth seem painful mockery? Doctor Elwin perceived my dejection, and encreased the anguish of my feelings by unmerited eulogium—"Katheren, you need not the admonitions of friendship to teach you discretion; your delicate and honorable conduct is sufficiently explicit; may your departure teach my poor young friend the vanity of his hopes!"—I could not speak; Doctor Elwin continued,—“think of my consternation, when I discovered that his reserve towards you, which I, gladly, attributed to indifference, proceeded from misconception! Lucy a few days back confessed to me the error of her conduct, with your magnanimity and forbearance.”—“Oh, Sir!” I cried, “there was more of pride than of forbearance or magnanimity in my conduct; indeed Doctor Elwin I foresaw my triumph,—else perhaps——” —“You would not have been so generously passive,” said my good friend, smiling, “but in disclaiming the heroism of endurance, you demonstrate the heroism of sincerity.—Ah, Katheren! you are a dangerous tempter; even the impossibility of success could not guard poor Morgan. I have deeply regretted my indiscretion, in permitting him to linger day after day in such

society, but your caution, my young Minerva, may yet counteract this imprudence."

Imagine my mortification Beatrice, at praise so undeserved—to have confessed that you were my adviser, would have been to betray my entire weakness.

Doctor Elwin resumed:—"She who could trifle with such a man as Morgan, would indeed be blameable; keenly susceptible, enthusiastic, refined, with sentiments so superior to the mediocrity of his situation, disappointments which, to grosser minds, firmer frames, or more elastic temperaments, might seem but trifling episodes, chequering, perhaps agreeably diversifying the dulness of life, would, I fear, cause the speedy termination of his, at all times, precarious existence." Roused by this remark, I faltered a trembling enquiry.—"Alas Katheren, my profession sometimes painfully taxes my humanity; the interest I feel in this fascinating young man, is increased by apprehension of his premature decay; he bears in his constitution a fearful taint; I remember his having once told me that almost all his mother's family had died of consumption. He is not formed to struggle with misfortune, or to contend with wounded pride; perhaps the only failing in his nature is want of sufficient energy to counteract a sickly sensibility, which, if over excited, might operate fatally." Terror and grief

overpowered me; I burst into a passion of tears. "Katheren," said Doctor Elwin, in a tone of astonishment, "Katheren! is it possible? Good heaven what have I done?" He threw himself back in the carriage, and during the remainder of our drive we spoke not. My reflections were gloomy and humbling; had Doctor Elwin penetrated a secret scarcely avowed to myself? But this mortification was forgotten in the tumult of more harrowing apprehensions.

We arrived at the cottage; my aunt surveyed me, and cast an anxious glance at Doctor Elwin; the gravity of his countenance increased her agitation; careless of consequences, I left them together—any thing was preferable to enquiry.—Even to myself I would not confess the real cause of my emotion. In the solitude of my chamber I tried to judge between my regret and my remorse, I tried to believe that the one was only excited by the other. My aunt came to me; in the increased tenderness of her manner I read her knowledge or her suspicion of my weakness; pride checked my tears, I became apparently tranquil. She spoke of herself, of her brighter prospects,—“Katheren, for more than twenty years, grief has been my constant companion; at length a ray of comfort appears; will not my Katheren participate in my pleasurable feelings? I have yielded to the remonstrances of an upright

and faithful friend, one who, I am persuaded, would not let partiality or compassion subdue integrity; he has made me feel that there is no necessity for our separation."—"Surely," said I, recoiling and astonished, "it was never contemplated!"—"Never but with agony," replied my aunt; "oh, my children, we will not part, no Katheren, not even when a nearer tie shall supersede that which unites us, still I may watch over, still guard my orphans." She then spoke of my cousin Edward's return, of the delight with which he anticipated meeting his relatives, I listened, not indeed with indifference, but with feelings far removed from that glow of rapture with which, once, I would have hailed the change in my beloved guardian. Half fearful of her remarking my apathy, I spoke heedlessly—"Shall I not also see my mother's sister and my cousin Mornington?"—"Heaven forbid!" ejaculated my aunt.—"He is then unworthy," said I, somewhat surprised at her unusual energy.—"Mornington is as exalted in mind as in rank," said my aunt, impressively, "but—" she hesitated; I felt impatience, and my looks expressed it.—She resumed, "this is not a moment to wound your pride by a disclosure which if made you would wish to forget; in pity to you, my child, I am silent, yet not by me, alone, has a barrier been raised between your mother's sister and her nieces; respect a parent's interdict Katheren, a father's.



dying prohibition!"—"My dear aunt," I cried, astonished at her agitation, "think you that I question your authority, or that I value relatives whose neglect of us proves their indifference?"—"And if they were *not* indifferent Katheren, if they implored, wept for you?"—Though surprised by this emphatic address I could not resist her beseeching earnestness, but throwing myself into her arms, exclaimed, "Even then, even then they should never win me from you—never!"

My aunt embraced me. "How had your very natural curiosity respecting the Earl of Blessingham and his mother, alarmed me," said she; "it awakened fears which had long slept; but my Katheren has reassured me; flattery and falsehood will not prevail with her." As if to prevent farther interrogatory, she left me.

Once I would have pondered on this strange conversation; all the busy and inquisitive propensities of my nature would have been active to investigate and solve; but, now, my mind seemed inert, my spirit in gloomy slumber; apathy was preferable to anguish, I would not awaken my torpid faculties to the misery of reflection. A reverie stole upon my senses, which imaged the preceding evening. We were at Mrs. Moreland's. Again my heart throbbled with pleasure, as memory dwelt on her maternal triumph, on the heartfelt rapture of her son, the exciting gaiety of George,

and the placid delight of Emma Elwin; Lucy, more than atoning for injustice by kindness and affection, while the good nature and real feeling of poor Mrs. Elwin, shone through her stately courtesy. My kind friend, Doctor Elwin, his fine countenance radiant with benevolence, and you, my Beatrice, sympathising in the general happiness, your features wearing that tranquil smile which speaks the pure composure of an equal mind.

There was yet another in the social group; his graceful form!—his eloquently speaking glance!—I started, paced the room, tried to divert my thoughts but could not.—Was such a being tortured by my caprice? Had I dared to trifle with one, noble in despite of birth, exalted far beyond adventitious circumstance? Had the vanity of which you accused me been indeed the heartless motive of my conduct, I felt at that moment a pang proportioned to such error.

I am called from you, Beatrice, by one who has power to lure me from all I once held most dear. Strange that a sentiment so novel should soothe, or at least shed temporary oblivion on the sorrows of a separation from the friends of my childhood!

## LETTER II.

The same to the same.

[IN CONTINUATION.]

I RETURN to you my sister, and willingly, for Mornington has left me, to write to his mother. I would describe to you my new life, my numerous visitors, my plans, my pursuits, but one great interest, that of analyzing the motives of my conduct during our first separation, so completely absorbs me, that, until I have sketched this brief yet eventful interval, I shall find all other subjects irksome. Will my conscience and my sister condemn or absolve me? Ah! Beatrice, the one may prove lenient,—but the other!

I have described to you my sensations on returning to our fondly remembered cottage. The gloomy forebodings of the melancholy night were not banished by the brightness of morning. Sweeney, observant and solicitous, proffered her little services; for the first time I thought her officious, and rebuked her. Her mournful countenance, as she looked at her capricious mistress, recalled me to better feeling, but I had, then, no

inclination to repair error, and poor Judith gently closed the door with, "Sure I'd break my heart for her." This spontaneous effusion turned the current of remorse into another, but less painful channel; to her at least, I could atone.

My aunt met me at breakfast; what a contrast to our, heretofore, social, happy meetings? Delicate and penetrating, she would not encrease by seeming to notice my dejection, and when our silent meal was concluded, she left me, saying she would join me in the music-room. I hastened thither; it looked comfortless; our instruments were at Doctor Elwin's, the dreary vacancy was disheartening. I thought of you; was I right in surmising that the expected sojourn of my cousin Edward at the cottage prevented your return?—My aunt had casually mentioned her son's intention of residing for the next four years with his guardian, and that you were to continue at Doctor Elwin's while Edward remained in Ireland. But even your destiny my sister, could not long divert my thoughts from the cause of our temporary separation. Think not that I wilfully indulged this weakness; to me, remembrance was too painful to be encouraged—I tried to read, but my thoughts wandered, the unturned page reproached my inattention—I threw away the book; opened my portfolio, and took a pencil—as if by a breath, the image impressed on my heart was transferred to

the paper—I flung it from me, and, covering my face, endeavoured to shut out the object which so incessantly pursued me. A wakeful night had left me languid; I reclined my head, my senses sank into lethargy or sleep. A low voice disturbed my slumber; it seemed to breathe my name—I was roused to consciousness, but not to motion; lassitude held me spell bound—“Is my ear too cheated?” I exclaimed, and, trying to still the throbbing of my heart, I again sought oblivion—“Kathleen!” was uttered, louder; nearer; I started up.

It was no deception no visionary form which met my astonished gaze; he was certainly before me; his unlicensed intrusion, his familiar address, strangely contrasting with the humility of his attitude. I endeavoured to look indifferent, to check or to conceal the glew which became every moment more painfully intense—a quick step approached, the door was flung hastily back, and my aunt appeared; she rushed forward with a sad and piteous cry, amazement, terror and tenderness, mingled in her countenance.—“My dear Lord!” she exclaimed, “my——.” Her features became frightfully contracted.—“It is his son!” she gasped, “it is Mornington! it is the Earl of Blessingham.”—“Even so, Madam,” said our mysterious visitor, rising, “*I* am Lord Blessingham—and *you* are——.” A smile of disdain curled his lip, each speaking lineament evinced the most

profound contempt; he turned from her—I stood transfixed—the despised, the humble Morgan, was my cousin Mornington!—was Earl of Blessingham!!—But I had not time to express my astonishment, our dear honored guardian, pale, tottering, looked towards me for support; her countenance, beautiful even in agony, responded no resentment; I flew to her; she clasped me convulsively,—“Katheren,” she faltered, “my own Katheren, you will not forsake me?”—“Never,” I cried, “never!”—Beatrice, even at that moment of excitement, a suspicion of my weakness prompted me to counteract it by instant and irreversible decision. My lips were parted to pronounce the solemn vow which would for ever have severed me from all but her. My cousin caught my hand, “Katheren,” he cried, impetuously, “beware! you have as near a relative, as fond, as doting as her, to whose selfishness you would sacrifice the sister, the only sister of your mother! whose name that mother gave her elder born, thus demonstrating the strength of her attachment to one whom you have been taught, perhaps, to detest; you have yet another relative, Katheren, the son of that injured woman, the proud and firm assertor of his mother’s right to your affection, the humble advocate of his own inferior claim.—Katheren, on your determination rest his hopes, his happiness, his existence——”

My aunt's emotion had subsided,—she calmly addressed my cousin.—“ Lord Blessingham, did she whose injuries you so strenuously assert—silencing those softer feelings which might have led you to spare the weak and unprotected—did she, I say, share my forbearance, the mind of her son would be unprejudiced as that of Katherine. My adopted children are entirely ignorant of the cause of our disunion.”

“ I would suggest, Madam,” interrupted Lord Blessingham, proudly, “ that both parties had not the same motive for secrecy; still I will vindicate my mother from invidious insinuation; she was silent, even as the aggressor, until provoked to sincerity and complaint by her fears lest the arts which had subjugated the child might enthrall the man,—and she was right, for nothing save the disclosure of her affecting story, the knowledge of her irritating wrongs, could have alienated me from you, from your son.”

“ Mornington!” said my aunt, in a sad and reproachful tone, “ it was not thus you looked, it was not thus you spoke, when, starting from your infant slumbers, you found me watchful of my cherished charge, when springing to my embrace, you would smile incredulous, indignant, at the suggestion that soon you would prefer another's care to mine, a mother's love to Miriam's!”

My cousin gazed fixedly at his mild reprover,

and spoke as if unconscious he was heard.—“ ’Tis like the dream of a former existence, bringing again the sweet tone whose melody soothed my restless spirit; ’tis the very form and face that captivated my childhood, that long filled my boyish fancy, to which I turned instinctively, in sickness and in sorrow; the one bright spot which memory presented through the dreary void of separation, luring me from natural ties, from natural affections, from a slighted though doting parent.—Oh! how have I knelt, implored, to be restored to you! the powers of life seemed withered, its very spring grew torpid when I lost you; the buoyant glee of childhood was succeeded by chilling apathy, the glow of health by the sickly hue of sorrow; to see you once more, once more to say, farewell, was all I supplicated!” He stopped, for she whom he apostrophized now sobbed convulsively, while I, bewildered, terrified and motionless, gazed alternately at either, doubting that the scene was real.—Lord Blessingham was deeply agitated; twice I fancied him on the point of casting himself at the feet of her who had power, thus, to awaken such opposite sensations; he restrained himself, appeared to reflect for a few moments, and his features gradually resumed their former sternness.—“ A mother’s wrongs,” he exclaimed, pacing the room, “ will shield me from such fatal influence—a mother spurned, outraged,



by the man who vowed to protect her—basely abandoned by him who ——.”

My aunt advanced, the tumult of grief gave way to wild energy. “Forbear, my lord,” she said, indignantly, “dare not, in my presence, even to whisper censure of him. My lord, you inherit his rank, his form, his features; seek to emulate his virtues—you can never find a more exalted precedent.”

“And who destroyed both him and them?” said Lord Blessingham, emphatically. My aunt shuddered, she cast an appealing look upward, and exclaimed, “It was I—it was I! whose blind romantic folly ruined him.”

“Katheren, you hear!” said my cousin.

“Pervert not this confession to my prejudice, Lord Blessingham, nor force me to be more explicit,” said my aunt, firmly; “if Katheren doubt me, with a breath I can dispel her error. Yours my lord, is sacred, hallowed by your filial tenderness, unassailable by me; I have a son, thus would I wish him to advocate a mother’s cause.”

“Your accusations and confessions, Madam, are alike ambiguous, it is for Katheren to consider whether purity shrouds itself in mystery, truth in enigmatical assertion, sincerity in oblique insinuation.—Forgive me Madam—just heaven! when I look at you, I can scarcely forgive myself, I would cleave to the cause of the injured, but an

impetuous tide of long slumbering recollections, the weaknesses of childhood, resume their sway, unnerve, unman me."

My aunt watched his changing aspect with trembling earnestness, while I, fearfully and silently, awaited the sequel of this extraordinary scene—again the softness of sympathy was chased from his countenance by the flush of indignation, "My mother," he exclaimed, "my noble, upright parent! is it thus your son looks on her who clouded the brightness of such a spring as yours, by usurping your sacred rights, by breaking the most tender, the most holy ties, by tearing from you husband, sister, child, while you!—you were pitilessly deserted, left in a foreign land, to the precarious charity of strangers.—Oh! Katheren, had you heard my mother, sincerity beaming in that face of which yours is the counterpart, pleading her cause before the son who shrunk perversely, selfishly, from belief of that, which struck at his fondest hopes; even you, the pupil of her bitter foe, would have upbraided my incredulity. Truth was at last triumphant, the tale of guilt and woe was terminated—a thousand tongues corroborated the statement—conviction followed—conviction of a parent's rectitude—deep, indelible! Will you, Katheren, condemn unheard?"

"It is rather a question of election than con-

VOL. II. R

demnation, Lord Blessingham?" said my aunt, coldly, "I exert no controul, my child is free."

I know not, Beatrice, what conclusion an impartial person might have drawn from this enigmatical conversation—for me to doubt the truth of my guardian, seemed little less than profanation, yet the dispassionate though impressive energy of my cousin's manner, might have carried conviction to any other mind—all was bewildering and contradictory; astonishment held my senses in suspension; I had passively listened while contumely was directed towards her who, on earth, was most sanctified in my estimation, but the moment for decision was arrived. "Katheren," said my aunt, "speak." I cast one sorrowful glance towards my cousin—it was to soften the harshness of renunciation—my aunt grew deadly pale, I sprang to her; "You do not doubt me, my mother," I exclaimed, "your wrongs shall be my wrongs, your griefs my griefs, your foes—mine."

"Mornington, my dear Mornington!" said my aunt, gently remitting the fond embrace in which she held me—she flew to my cousin—I dared not expose my firmness to another glance—surely the misery of years was concentrated in that moment!

"I was not prepared for this bitter disappointment, this complete rejection," faltered Lord Blessingham, "but I submit to a decision which aversion, alone, could have made so cruelly definite.

You have conquered Madam, yours are the beguiling tears we shed for those we torture."

I covered my face and leaned against the window frame for support; no longer able to combat the tumult of apprehension which the remembrance of Doctor Elwin's suggestions excited, I felt as if the crisis of my fate were at hand, and that it must be fatal—a silence, more oppressive than complaint, succeeded—at length it was broken.—“Katheren,” said Lord Blessingham, “farewell! had I seen but one spark of regret, I would not speak of withered hopes, of wounded feelings, the day dreams of my youth clouded by disappointment; but I will strive against such selfishness, I will rejoice at that indifference which shields you from suffering.”

I seemed changed to stone, and rejoiced in my inability to quit that posture which concealed emotions I could not controul—slow, hesitating footsteps approached the door—“Katheren, farewell!”—I seemed obstinately, heartlessly silent—there was a lingering pause—a deep and anguished sigh; my cousin rushed forward and caught my hand.—“Katheren,” he cried, in a tone of astonishment, “Katheren!” My countenance was revealed—if it expressed the agony of my feelings, it must have been sufficiently explicit. “My child, my poor unhappy child, what am I to think

of this emotion?" said my aunt, hastening to support me.

"That we will not be separated," cried my cousin, impetuously, "Oh Madam! for her I will lose the remembrance of injury—you are not inhuman, you will pity your brother's offspring, if you will not pity ——." He stopped abruptly.

"Brother!" repeated my aunt, passionately, "you were right, my lord, to remind me of my poor Philip—humiliation, wretchedness were predicted for her who should ——. I cannot, I will not consent!" she ejaculated, wildly; "revile, torture, kill me, I will not consent!"

My cousin, who had knelt, arose; his lips were compressed, as if unable or unwilling to express the fulness of his indignation; he grasped my hand more firmly, and stood gazing at my aunt with the severity of a reproving spirit. As my companions became excited, my emotion subsided; I calmly addressed Lord Blessingham. "Let this painful contention end, my lord, let it never be renewed; we must part—to conceal from you, now, the real state of my feelings, would be a useless attempt at dissimulation; if I did so at first, it was with the hope that pride would assist you to conquer an unrequited attachment; will it mitigate the bitterness of separation, to be assured that in its keenest pang it is shared? but enough of this—my dear, dear aunt," I continued, "exhortations

to firmness are unnecessary; I *can* govern my heart, and I *will*." Alas Beatrice, at the moment this proud vaunt was made, I again sank, trembling and breathless—Doctor Elwin entered abruptly. "Lord Blessingham," he said, "I am mortified at the disclosure which has just been made; I would apologize —."

"My good Sir," interrupted my cousin, in a hurried and agitated tone, "it is for me to apologize; the concealment of my rank originated in the merry caprice of your son; we will waive all ceremony, I claim for the Earl of Blessingham the cordial kindness which Doctor Elwin, granted to the humble Morgan."

"Morgan," ejaculated my aunt, casting a look of impatient enquiry at Doctor Elwin; it was answered by one which confirmed her surmise.

Lord Blessingham continued.—"You, Sir, are the common friend of all parties; you have, perhaps, penetrated a secret never avowed until this day. I love my cousin; more than life depends on your intercession."

"And Katheren," said Doctor Elwin, earnestly, " —."

This appeal again revived the contest. I extended my clasped hands to my guardian; she pressed them fervently; the agony of my sacrifice was, I fear, but too apparent. Doctor Elwin gently released one yielding hand, and held it

lightly. "Mrs. Jermyn," he said, "concession will prevent evils, greater than any which it can produce; do you sanction my interference?"

"Oh my only friend! will you, too, strive against me?" said my guardian.

There was a pause of a moment. How my heart throbbed! "Katheren has another relative," she continued, "Miss St. Elmour, let the decree be hers, I cannot pronounce it."

"And if she consent?" said Doctor Elwin, eagerly.

My aunt sank on her knees, she seemed to utter a prayer with breathless intensity of supplication—even Lord Blessingham appeared affected, he approached her.—"Miriam," he said, "may that name awaken sentiments, which you profess once to have felt for the son of ——," Doctor Elwin bent forward and held up a warning hand,—“for him you once loved, even as you were loved by him; I implore forgetfulness of the past, I look to you for life or death.”

"Doctor Elwin," said my aunt, "all is known to you—to you I have submitted each strange event, each torturing conflict of my unhappy life."

A smile of incredulity flitted over the features of my cousin, as my aunt made this assertion.—She continued, "You know the solemn interdict which severs Katheren from her mother's nearest relative."

"It was never meant to extend farther," interrupted Doctor Elwin, "no enmity could descend to the child of your brother's dearest friend! do you think Sir Philip Mornington would have opposed this union? Rather believe that the memory of his friend would have endeared the tie, that the merits of the son would have obliterated the errors of the mother."—Lord Blessingham bit his lip.—"My dear Mrs. Jermyn," continued the unobservant Doctor Elwin, "grief has made you superstitious, you would exalt into prophetic inspiration the effusion of an indignant, or of a wounded spirit. Had your brother lived, time would have mitigated such antipathy, those Christian feelings which in his dying hour were perhaps granted to his prayer, would have been triumphant; with contrite spirit he would have welcomed the hour of reconciliation,"—my aunt started,—"*or* of forgiveness," continued the doctor, "and this hand," he held up mine, "would have been placed—here."

Quite unprepared for such a conclusion, it was with mingled terror, astonishment and delight, that I found my hand grasped with frenzied eagerness by my cousin. Doctor Elwin led us towards my aunt, and I knelt before her; she turned from us, wept bitterly—"And you, too, Katheren!" she cried.—Beatrice, some strange fascination held me silent. She stood a moment



in suspense, then addressing Doctor Elwin, "I cannot consent—I will not! But if Miss St. Elmour approve, I no longer oppose." She cast at me a reproachful glance, and hurried from the room. I would have followed instantly, but was prevented—persuasion and remonstrance were in turn exerted to win my concurrence to this reference. Doctor Elwin, by expressing a doubt of Miss St. Elmour's acquiescence, made me more passive. He left us.

My mind was torn by emotions, which the whirlwind of passion alternately raised and dispersed, now swayed by duty, affection, gratitude, now by a more impetuous and alas! a more engrossing sentiment.—Was I henceforth to be governed by impulse? I endeavoured to reflect and combine, it was impossible—obscure implications, perplexing assertions, accusations and reproaches baffled conjecture. Calm investigation could scarcely have discovered a clue which might guide to rational and fair induction, was it then to be caught by the wandering conceptions of a mind passion-tossed, passion-governed, now yielding to the memory of more than a mother's love, now subjugated by a new born sentiment which terrified by the influence it had already obtained.

Lord Blessingham saw the conflict and tried to sooth me, but self-accused, almost self-condemned, I would not be comforted. Disdaining to seek

the development of what my aunt evidently wished concealed, I avoided every allusion to this painful mystery; not by an enemy, at least, would I hear my beloved guardian censured. I prayed to be left to solitude, and my cousin quitted me, satisfied with the reiteration of a promise which, at that moment, was conditional, but which in the end bound me to him irrevocably.

### LETTER III.

The same to the same.

[IN CONTINUATION.]

THE following morning brought Doctor Elwin to the cottage; he presented me with a letter from Miss St. Elmour; I copy it for your perusal.

“ I will be sincere, Katheren, and say that I wish your cousin and you had never met; still, your mutual attachment, the merits of your lover, with other circumstances, prevail in counteracting, perhaps in overcoming, deep rooted opinions, and I entirely concur with Doctor Elwin in apprehending more mischief from separation than from

union. I have expressed these sentiments in a letter to Mrs. Jermy. We will trust to heaven for your preservation, beseeching you most earnestly to submit yourself in all things to Him who will teach you to distinguish between truth and its similitudes, to detect and baffle the efforts of a crooked and criminal policy. Thus far we may exhort our Katheren, but the wife of Lord Blessingham cannot be forewarned beyond this.

“MARY.”

This solemn address, far from relieving, increased my perturbation. With whom or what was I to contend? Fancy, which images the horrible in the mysterious, conjured up a phantom, terrific in its shadowy and uncertain outline. I was roused to harassing realities by my cousin and Doctor Elwin—the fiat was pronounced—I was plighted—betrothed—married!

Events were precipitated with appalling celerity; I supplicated for delay; Lord Blessingham conjured; his mother was ill; she had been but recently acquainted with his sojourn in Ireland; that country, from early misfortunes experienced there, was hateful to her; she had often expressed to her son a superstitious belief that it would prove as pernicious to him, and had solemnly requested he would avoid it; his disobedience had perhaps endangered her life. Could he leave me in the power of those whose influence might be exerted to the

subversion of his dearest hopes? My aunt seemed stunned into acquiescence; her eyes, with melancholy earnestness, were fixed on Doctor Elwin, but that benevolent man could not resist the perseverance of his young friend; he yielded.

Then came the extraordinary confession that my cousin was a catholic; had been educated in that faith by his mother. A double ceremony was necessary. "This new obstacle," said my guardian, quickly, "must be imparted to Miss St. Elmour, perhaps ——." Hope lurked in the half expressed, half implied doubt. "But Miss St. Elmour, herself a catholic, will scarcely make my religion an objection," said my cousin. Lord Blessington was right; our meek relative again professed the same sentiments, and concluded another affecting letter with the request that the second ceremony should be performed in the chapel of Dunane, by father Karwin. The situation of her uncle, she said, would prevent her witnessing our union, but she should feel a melancholy satisfaction in knowing that the grandchildren of Lady Katherine Conways were united beneath the roof of their ancestors.

I asked for you; in the most solemn, perhaps the most trying scene of my existence, was I not to be supported by Beatrice? My aunt in this was inflexible, and even Doctor Elwin obdurate;

on the eve of separation, only, was I permitted to embrace my sister.

Upon the evening of that day on which I had pledged myself for ever to the weal or the wo of another, I prepared for the repetition of my nuptial vow, and, conducted by Doctor Elwin, found myself stealthily gliding beneath a roof from which I should have been spurned if I had openly approached it. I tried to think of Mary St. Elmour, anticipating, perhaps eagerly, the boon she had solicited, and, stilling the swellings of a haughty spirit, in silence followed my companion. He opened a narrow gothic doorway, and I stood in a place of religious worship; the pointed and painted window, the fluted columns of dark gray marble, the high altar, the tall crucifix, the ponderous missal, with all the symbols and appurtenances of catholic worship, lay in solemn and striking repose before me, checking the turbulence of regret, and soothing the irritation of pride. The last rays of the evening sun, darting through the storied casement, diffused around a mellowed light, and seemed to shed a holy lustre on the scene, rendering ineffectual the pale glimmering lamp which burned in the silver candelabrum. The jarring tumult of worldly emotion was hushed; I looked around; a slanting sunbeam fell on a marble flag whose color alone

distinguished it from the darker pavement, and I read the name of "Mary St. Elmour."

"She was the sister of your grandmother," said Doctor Elwin, "and that—" pointing to a polished and sculptured monument at a short distance,— "that cenotaph was erected to the wife of your great uncle, the present Earl of Dunane. Unfortunate women! sisters in misery, united in death! But pity and regret must no longer absorb us, Countess; Lord Blessingham will not thank me if I deck his bride in tears, even though they beautify. Miss St. Elmour has requested to see you previous to the ceremony; I will conduct her hither; mean-time I do not leave you unprotected."

At this moment a figure appeared stealing through the arched doorway. I observed, in silence, the uncouth apparel of this witness to an Earl's nuptials; a rusty flapped hat, bound round the brim by a piece of small cord, shaded his face, while a surcoat, fastened in front by a wooden bodkin, dangled from his shoulders. Something however in the air and general appearance struck me as familiar, and a melancholy glance, shot suddenly from beneath the slouched covering, awakened remembrance—it was poor Tade. I sprang to greet this affectionate creature, but my cordial salutation met no responsive smile; I had not

time to enquire concerning his altered and squalid appearance; Doctor Elwin addressed me in a low voice. "We must be careful," he said, "to avoid the prying recognition of Katwin's spies; will you remain here, under a trusty warder, while I seek Miss St. Elmour? your conference with her must be brief; a signal will announce Lord Blessingham's approach, you will then separate." A boding sensation unnerved me; the sight of Tade had recalled remembrances linked with horror; I caught the hand of my kind friend, and faltered the name of Helen.

"She would not, now, harm you if she could," said Doctor Elwin, emphatically; her delusion is past—at least for the present—you are no longer identified in her imagination with the object of her hatred; she knows all."

"Would to Heaven that I too knew all!" cried I, vehemently; "these mysterious insinuations distract me. Oh, Sir! why not impart to me too, that comprehensive *all*?"

"Lady Blessingham," he replied, "you have more to apprehend from curiosity than from concealment. Do you doubt the solicitude of your best friends?—Do you think that aught else than mature deliberation counsels silence?"

I was mute;—the knowledge of this secret might separate me from Lord Blessingham! a

thrill of terror shot through my veins, and from that moment I determined to resign myself to destiny.

Doctor Elwin turned to our silent companion:—"Sweeney will you guard the Countess until my return?"

"Will a duck drink?" cried Tade, heaving a deep sigh; "'tis only wastin' o' words, to bid me mind Miss Kathrin.—You're not a Countess quite yet though," he cried, abruptly turning towards me, after having carefully secured the door by which Doctor Elwin had retreated; "and may be you won't neither, plase God!"—He looked round impatiently.

I had no time to comment on this singular obtestation; a figure glided from a distant pillar, and the bright, scintillating, speckless eye of the *maria* Helen met mine.

"Don't be so frightful, Miss Katheren," whispered my guard, "'tis Tade himself stands by you; can't ye be bold now?—Sure you've a good hack; drop your head curtain honey, and hearken to her; 'tis for your good. Spake to her granny, spake to her, out with it all; plain dealin' may save her, body and soul!"

The woman caught my hand, while I, mechanically, obeyed my adviser and dropped my veil. "Ha!" she shrieked, as her wasted fingers



fastened on my wedding ring, "not yet, not yet."

"Whisht, whisht!" said Tade, "whisht or we're blown; would ye be wantin' to say, 'come catch me Karwin,'—if the lawyer gets a grip of you again gran'mother, you'll never lose the print of his fingers, an' you live as long as the Phooka!"

Ileen, mean-while, was endeavouring to disengage the ring, but I resisted.—"Poor thing," she muttered, "poor thing! would you yoke with the serpent?—clasp in your arms the wily snake?"

As she spoke, a conviction of her continued aberration chilled me; I sank upon the marble flag.

"Can't you speak plain?" cried Tade, angrily, "she's not a hathen to penetrate your flourishes."

"Daughter of Macarthy More," said Ileen, sternly, "in a dark vault beneath this pavement lie two victims of that serpent's treachery; Irrelagh contains a third; a fourth is, exile, in a foreign land,—but the fairest is to follow.—Will you fulfil the prophecy?"

I shook with terror.—" 'Tis true as the gospel!" ejaculated Tade, "a witch begotten by the father o' lies!—The cross come between us an' har

struck me that the grandson

shared the parent's hallucination.—Was I then in the power of two insane visionaries?

"Listen!" said Ileen,—she encircled my waist with her arm; I was unable to repel her.—"Once there stood at that altar three brides; they were joyous, and bright, and fair!"—she sighed deeply,—"two are dead—the other—offspring of Katheren Conwayne, behold the other!" She thrust forward her weird countenance; I started from her grasp.

"For the love o' the Saints will you spake to the point?" cried Tade impatiently, "talk of your beauty indeed! where is it now I wonder?—This comes o' your larnin'; Mistress Shusan would have told the story in no time."—Some one tapped gently at the western door.—"'Tis all up! 'tis all up!" he continued, clasping his hands despairingly, and hastening to unlock it.

The maniac sprang from me and disappeared 'mid the gloom which now enveloped the more distant part of the chapel. Three persons entered beneath the arch; Doctor Elwin and Lord Blessingham advanced towards me; they were followed by Father Karwin, who slowly ascended the marble steps which led to the altar, and unclosed the missal.—"We must be brief, Lady Blessingham," said Doctor Elwin; "your uncle is in a paroxysm; Miss St. Elmour cannot leave him until I take her place as his guard; the ceremony must

be performed instantly." I made no reply, but waved him from me; Doctor Elwin looked inquisitively at Tade.—"If that wretched woman has again alarmed the Countess, she has forfeited my friendship for ever."

"Is it disturbin' her Countesship she'd be?" said Tade, evasively; "sure you must be dreamin' Doctor Elwin; 'twould be lately come to her to bother a Countess!"

This short dialogue completely silenced me. Could I deprive these unfortunate lunatics of their only friend?

"Katheren, my own Katheren," said Mornington.

"Not yet, not yet!" was uttered in sounds low yet distinct; they seemed breathed from the marble column against which I leaned, and pierced my ear, though apparently unheard by my companions. Mornington took my hand, and led me to the altar. The shades of evening now shrouded all in obscurity, save where the lamp cast its pale and melancholy light; the tremulous but impressive voice of the priest began the final ceremony; a solemn interrogatory was responded to, by Lord Blessingham, in a tone steady and serious; the venerable man then addressed me, and I too would have repeated the vow which, a few hours before, had passed my lips in the protestant church, but an icy coldness crept through my veins as the

ominous voice, sharp and shrill, again struck my ear, uttering a repeated negative. Some trembling exclamation escaped me; the priest, absorbed by the solemnity of his office, was unobservant, and the ceremony was concluded. A deep groan burst from the lips of the inexplicable Tade. Doctor Elwin again regarded him with displeasure.

"What a pillilu the wind makes," cried this prevaricating being, "a forcing its way up them passages there, moanin' like a dyin' man." He turned to a door of the chancel opposite to that by which we had entered, and whence, in truth, at that moment issued a moaning sound.

"The solemnity of this gloomy place has infected my Katheren," said Mornington, leading me towards the western entrance.

"And Miss St. Elmour," said Doctor Elwin; "Countess, will you disappoint her?"

I stood irresolute, unwilling to express my apprehensions. "I will but conduct Lord Blessingham to his carriage," continued our friend, "and take Miss St. Elmour's watch near her uncle; she will speedily join you; think of her regret, Lady Blessingham, should you refuse a last interview."

With sudden impulse I disengaged my hand from Mornington's; Doctor Elwin hurried my husband from the chapel, replying to his remonstrances by assurances that his carriage would

soon convey me to the cottage. They passed together beneath the arch—I turned to the priest, but he was gone.

“You needn’t be peepin’ through the pillars, your Countesship,” said Tade, “lookin’ as if your heart would jump out of your eyes; dickons a glimpse you’ll catch, again, of a ghost in the flesh to give you fair warning; ’tis all up with you now entirely, and God help you!” he ejaculated with a motion of the head indicative of the deepest commiseration; “Father Karwin has clinched the matter. To say that none of the good people would give him a nudge, just to save you from Satan’s provider! Sour luck to her, and no honey to sweeten it!”

Confounded by this singular lament, and extraordinary imprecation, I listened breathlessly, during a short pause, for the footstep of Miss St. Elmour. Awful stillness encreased the throbbings of fear, while the growing darkness was scarcely relieved by the lamp, whose light was reflected in the marble cenotaph. Wishing to divert the tide of Tade’s vituperation, which filled me with nameless terror, I read aloud, “Sacred to Illin, Countess of Dunane, great granddaughter of Donough Macarthy, Earl of Glencare.”

“Humph!” cried Tade, with a laugh of irritation, placing himself between the dumb memorials of the dead, “Countess indeed! a fine name

for folks to pawn their souls for—plain Madam and sure salvation flogs it out an' out. Who'd be a Countess?—not I faicks!" His tone expressed a strange mixture of vexation and sorrow; I dared not interrupt his ravings. "There," he cried, contemptuously, pointing to the proud monument and the humble flagstone, "there they lie, misfortunate cratures! one was, an' t'other was next door to a Countess; great good their grandeur did 'um—a purty pass they came to! Wasn't pride the divil's eggshell? Haven't sweet roots often sour sauce? Answer me, that, if you please. They must be Countesses indeed, an' so after their lives being bothered out of 'um entirely poor things, their empty carcasses were cheated besides, choused out o' the bit o' raal consacrated ground they chose for themselves in the abbey beyont. Wasn't that a purty bedivilment pray? 'Cause they were my lord's sister and wife, they must be buried under his nose to be sure! where's the wonder if their souls walked howling for their body's misplacement? An' you Miss Kathrin, to b'lieve such blarney; to be coaxed, an' be cozened, an' be Countessed! Why Jude is twice as cunning—dickons a Countess they'd make of her, I defy 'em; she's too 'cute—but what's that, what's that?"

Confused sounds had also caught my attention; voices in anger and expostulation were heard. "'Tis the ould boy himself," cried Tade, "but

what, in the name o' contraries, brings him here? I'd as soon look to see a crow crossin' himself." He clasped his hands, and gazed around in intense perplexity. Hasty footsteps approached. "Hide up, hide up, Miss Kathrin, run behint t'other side o' the tomb for your life; I'll croonkle myself up in a corner out o' the shade o' the light; hide up, hide up will you!"

Mechanically I obeyed, more in apprehension of the consequences of contradicting him in his present irritable mood, than fearing an interruption which I almost welcomed. The uncounted phraseology and expressive idiom of my companion had become to me perfectly familiar, and I could readily excuse a flippancy that was not meant to offend, but this was mingled with a wailing despondency, and a wild indignant censure of my present exalted rank, which I could only attribute to partial frenzy.

I had not leisure for lengthened rumination; the door near the altar was thrown open; I glanced from my hiding place; two figures appeared, the foremost was enveloped in a long crimson robe, but the head was uncovered, and in the features, wasted by age and stormy passions, in the dark lurid eye, the haughty brow, scarcely shaded by the thinly scattered hair, I recognised the original of your sketch when you portrayed our vindictive un-

followed by a female bearing a

lamp, which, as she hurriedly advanced, she held on high, casting an apprehensive glance around; the sickly light fell on the marble features of Mary St. Elmour. One moment was given to eager scrutiny; she seemed relieved from oppressive suspense, her countenance resumed its usual expression, and in a low expostulatory tone, she addressed her companion, who, with imperious and repulsive gesture, seemed to forbid her pursuit. Some powerful excitement appeared to nerve his feeble frame as he tottered towards the cenotaph; he laid his shrivelled hand on the entablature; his lips quivered and parted; a hoarse sepulchral sound was emitted. "Curses on the authors of my misery shall mark my hour of annihilation," he ejaculated, with horrid fervor. I shuddered, but even at the risk of discovery I could not withdraw my eyes from their fascinated gaze: he seemed to collect his failing energies for the fulness of denunciation. "My wife, my child, may your murderers ——."

"This violence will destroy you," interposed the recluse—she pointed to the crucifix—"let that teach you submission!"

"Submission to what and whom?" he demanded, the palsied impotence of age horribly contrasted by his mental fury.—"Submission to a being who, if he exist, preordained me, while yet sinless, to a



life of torture? You would cheat me of the only vengeance I have left!"

"Revenge is the pitiful confession of pain and weakness," said the recluse; "even the Pagan would proudly disclaim such degrading influence; at least be consistent, deride not superstition, while you adhere to its most debasing result, the belief that your anathema will produce a consequence."

"It will at least produce relief," responded the Earl.

"Oh look not for relief from such a source!" said Miss St. Elmour; "I conjure you let me summon the confessor."

"To pour on me the pretended chrism of sanctification, and mumble the jargon of hypocrisy—confession!" he cried, scoffingly, "will not purgatory cleanse even the unshrived sinner? that convenient lodgment credited by credulity, through which the maudlin criminal hopes to win a paradise—the promises and penalties of priestcraft, by me, are equally derided."

"Where there is no faith in the power which, alone, can render your malediction effective, what availeth it to curse?" said Miss St. Elmour.

"To prevent the repetition of galling remonstrances," replied the Earl; "it is you, you who have driven me to this, daring to intercede for the offspring of a wretch who has realised the fabled

atrocities of Pagan invention.—May those Morningtons ——.”

“Indeed, indeed you are mistaken,” interposed Miss St. Elmour, “why credit the subtle devices of Karwin?—Those innocent beings are ——.”

“The predestined inheritors of my hatred!” interrupted the Earl, furiously.—“May they be accursed, and may she ——.”

Personal apprehension, and even indignation, were suspended for the moment, by a surmise that our beloved guardian was to be the next object of imprecation. I darted forward, and knelt before this remorseless man; he staggered back; horror and hatred glared from his eyes.—“Monster!” he cried, mastering by a violent effort, the suspension which seemed caused by amazement; “hateful precursor of mischief and wo, art thou come to blast with the tale of thy torments, to evidence the truth of everlasting suffering?—I will *not* believe, I will *not* believe!” he repeated, with delirious violence, “nor saint nor demon, flesh nor spirit shall persuade!”—His countenance became livid, his eyes turned in their sunken lids; I would have supported him; he waved his arms wildly to prevent my approach, and, with a cry of despair fell prostrate on the pavement.

The cry was echoed:—a squalid and witch-like form sprang from a pillar near the altar, and sinking on the tomb of Lady Mary St. Elmour,

pointed a long lean finger at the fallen Earl, then waving aloft her open palm, she shouted "Retribution!"

Miss St. Elmour knelt beside her uncle; my faculties were suspended by horror.—"He is dead, he is quite dead," said the recluse, solemnly; "All-seeing power, if prayer and penance ——." The words faded from my ear; I reeled; the shrivelled arms of Helen encircled me; the sweet voice of Mary St. Elmour uttered words of gentle encouragement, but I soon became insensible to their sympathy.

#### LETTER IV.

The same to the same.

[IN CONTINUATION.]

THE caresses, the tears of Beatrice recalled me to consciousness; I was at the cottage with the dear, dear friends of my heart, with my husband, my Mornington! the fearful actors, the mystic omens in that awful scene of trial and of terror, were for the while forgotten, or remembered only as the incorporeal agents and fantastic inconsistencies of a troubled dream.

Gradually, however, memory links together, with miraculous minuteness, the disconnected chain, and, when alone, when fancy riots and reason slumbers, the imagery of my mental perception seems, by force of reminiscence, transferred to the external world—again I cower before my impla-

cable relative—again shrink from the fitful gleamings of the maniac's eye, while I find myself unconsciously repeating her wild portentous rhapsodies, or recalling the paradoxical aphorisms, and inexplicable allusions of the sad inheritor of her fearful malady. Beatrice, my mind has lost the energy of which I was once so proud, it yields to superstition, that gloomy guide whose dim and mystic subtleties exert a secret influence even over those who feign to scoff, or smile at its illusions. How often have I endeavoured to ridicule its effects, while my heart throbbed with terror, and my eye dilated with wonder, as I listened to the legendary tale whose monstrous fiction shocked my judgment, while its horrors haunted my imagination, deriving the semblance of consistency from credulity.—You, Beatrice, condemn and ridicule these wanderings of distempered fancy; you are right my sister.

I had scarcely recovered to security and happiness, when I was compelled to endure the agony of separation by Lady Blessingham's summons; we have been three days at the castle, and, as yet there is no intelligence of her approach,—would that this dreaded introduction were over! still, no anticipation can prove so painful as the retrospect of that parting scene, the memory of which clouds the sunshine of hope. To a reunion with you I may look forward, but my

aunt!—let me detail the particulars of my last memorable interview with her.

Doctor Elwin had succeeded in forcing you from me, when she appeared to say, farewell. My heart for a moment ceased to beat, as I marked the ravages made by a few days of mental conflict. Gracious Heaven! what is that unexplained evil which excites such distracting fears? She appeared absorbed in grief, incapable, as I thought, even of the exertion of blessing her child.—Ah, I knew not what force affection can give this inestimable woman! I clasped my arms around her, but she stood entranced in that deep communion of thought which leaves the external organs incapable of perception—her eye seemed to pursue some fearful object, while the chill shuddering of her frame marked her terrible excitement: at length with a deep and moaning sigh she murmured—“My poor lost Katheren!”

“This weakness is unpardonable,” said Lord Blessingham, haughtily; “is my wife to be tortured by visionary evils? Is her guileless nature to be tainted with suspicion, engendered by jealousy? You would wither the bonds of affection, Madam, by parading the chill portents of superstition—recollect Miss Mornington—”

My start of astonishment arrested his speech. “Miss Mornington! why address my aunt by her patronymic?”

“You have indeed recalled me to myself, and

to what is due to the sister of Sir Philip Mornington," said my aunt, proudly. Lord Blessingham approached her, but she waved him off, with an air of quiet majesty I had never before seen her assume; it seemed caught from her mysterious interlocutor, who, indignant at the rejection of his proffered hand, folded his arms, and stood in statue-like coldness, as if disdainingly to manifest the slightest emotion.

"I have been too pliant, too passive," continued my aunt, "I have betrayed the trust reposed in me; shall I remain for ever in lethargic supineness, nor say one word, nor make one struggle to save the child of my poor Philip? It is no exaggeration of fancy, Lord Blessingham; that child is in peril, and I will speak—Katheren you will be called on to make a fearful election, to exert, for your years, most miraculous judgment. —Fascination, the world's applause, the brilliancy of wit, the power of simulation, are all combined against me; were it a question of simple individual preference, I would be silent—I would mourn the alienation of my child, but I would not murmur. This choice however, will, I fear, involve your future happiness, for if the teacher be despised, her lessons will soon be forgotten; your principles Katheren, are exalted, your sentiments generous, your heart pure; but you are proud, resentful, ambitious and credulous; credulous from very enthusiasm in

virtue.—Is such a character calculated to penetrate the depths of hypocrisy?"

Lord Blessingham started from his seeming reverie; his countenance expressed the keenest irritation, but my aunt laid her hand upon his arm, her look of meek expostulation was irresistible.—“Surely, Mornington, my exordium has been too general to excite resentment, may not a parent be permitted to admonish her child?"

“But why not define the danger,” I cried; “stay with me, stay with me my mother, and I shall be safe; Mornington, for my sake, will give up that world which you think preferred before you, by your Katheren; we will return to La Motte—”

“And *my* mother,” interrupted Lord Blessingham, “the sister of yours, Katheren, is she to be abandoned?"

“She will learn to love La Motte,” cried I, “she will learn to love—.” I stopped, for my aunt’s pale countenance now wore the livid hue of death, a slight convulsion parted her lips, but with instantaneous effort she mastered her emotion.

“My child,” she said, “you speak of a union of hearts which can never assimilate; it is impossible; you have voluntarily chosen the only lot which could have parted us for ever.”

“For ever!” I repeated vehemently, “and who dares arrogate authority to decree such a separation?"

“I do,” said my aunt, rapidly, “I do, Katheren,

but it is the consequence of your own act; you have selected another protector,—were it to his care, alone, you were committed, I should be tranquil. Look not so indignant, Lord Blessingham, you shall be satisfied, the wishes of a husband, to me, are sacred, I would not war even against his prejudices. No remonstrance Katheren, for your sake I can be firm; would to Heaven, my child, I could by this my last solemn admonition divest you of the frailty of human feeling,—would to Heaven I could give you strength to strive against a resentful spirit, and to subdue it! Katheren, you are the stake with which I hope to win all I prize in this world,—be steady my child,—search beyond the surface, be not seduced by the gloss of refinement, the glitter of eloquence, the bombast of exaggerated sentiment, to give up, or even to doubt for a moment that which you have, hitherto, considered holy. Turn from that insinuating but pernicious poison, which, while it lauds you as superior to humanity, degrades you beneath it, by making your credulous vanity the instrument of your subjection. You will be thrown into collision with connexions yet untried; Katheren, there are in the world those who look like the innocent flower, and yet are serpents—beware!”

“With what farther warning against imaginary temptation, is my Katheren to be harassed?” said Lord Blessingham, who had listened hitherto in silence, his countenance expressing a singular



mixture of incongruous emotion, scorn and admiration contending for mastery.

My aunt answered mildly, "Would that I were depicting imaginary dangers, Lord Blessingham, which have nothing corresponsive in real life; I prize too much the verdict of my conscience to be deterred, even by your disapprobation, from that small portion of sincerity compatible with the happiness of my child; others will not imitate my forbearance.—May the future years of Katheren's existence present no proof that they too betrayed their trust! Let me be forgotten if you will, but my precepts, never; this is the last time I shall interpose my counsel; Katheren however, will recollect she has another guardian."

"Be tranquil, Madam," said Lord Blessingham, "the watchfulness of a husband will, I hope, suffice to shield Lady Blessingham from the snares you so tenaciously anticipate; to what other protector would you commend my wife?"

"To Him whose watchfulness is paramount to that of all others, to Him before whom we shall be called upon, hereafter, to render an account of our stewardship, before whom, even in your opinion, my lord, I shall one day stand acquitted."

"Miriam," said Lord Blessingham, "almost you persuade me to credit you." He again extended his hand; she looked at him fondly, every trace of coldness vanished; my heart flattered, each nerve throbbed with expectation—were my

gloomy forebodings to cease? Were these inexplicable enemies at length to be reconciled?—"I will accept no concession which is not the consequence of conviction, and I would not purchase my acquittal at the price of your peace!" said my aunt, emphatically.—"Farewell! may you be happy! Heaven bless you both!" Her countenance expressed the most intense affection, the most poignant regret. I would have clung to her, implored her to relent, but with that mildly authoritative signal we have been so long accustomed to obey, she forbade my approach: Mornington flew to support me, I turned from his embrace to seek for one, almost, as dear—she was gone. I saw her no more.

Beatrice, what am I to think, how decide between two persons equally estimable? Has my aunt, in truth, depicted perils which have no counterpart in real life, or am I indeed destined to struggle with some evil, material or immaterial, person or principle, with my own erring propensities, with the subtle seductions of another, or with both? Even to you, Beatrice, I dare not name at whom suspicion points; write to me instantly, if possible soothe my troubled spirit; even a distant hope of seeing *her* again would change the color of my feelings. Should you condemn my conduct as unstable, for a little while, dear sister, suspend your sentence. Conscience struck, I now shrink from the judgment at first implored—spare me,

till I acquire firmness to support coldness and disapprobation. Sister, dear sister, I am sufficiently humbled; my own heart is restless in accusation:—shall I ever still this tumultuous throb of, regret, and remorse?

### LETTER V.

[Judith Sweeney, to Mrs. Susan Sweeney.]

Blessingham Castle.

AUNT CHUSY, aunt Chusy, arn't Lelever? Sure I'm writing a letter!—how you'll stare when you spy in the prescription—'Your loving Niece, Judith Sweeney!'—I'm in a castle a hunder times bigger than Dunane, with towers like steeples, all built of nate plaster spic and span, without no ivy to dirty 'um, nor slits for peep holes, but big windows, bright and broad as Turk Lake himself. Then the rooms, you can't reckon 'um, no more than the skulls at old Mucruss—God mark the same to grace!—with glass and gold glistening, and pictures and cur'osities, and carpets, that your foot would sink into just like into a bog—when I twigged 'um how I clucked at thinking o' Madam Elwin and her Kidderminster!—why 'tis nothing to 'um. And then the tenants, not like the poor ragged followers and fosterers of the Conways, with brogues and canbagues, but dacent, genteel folk, with pumps and stockings, and their wives with mode cloaks and lace trimmings.—And then the servants, proper, portly people, with buckles

in their breeches as well as in their shoes, and powder in their hair, and nate tails like a tobacco twist, and sich fine manners and fine talk ! though 'twas long afore I could come to the marrow of their speech, by rason of their cut'ous English ; they put a tume to it Ma'am, to cover the mistakes. And then the company, aunt Chusy, all grand and glorious, and disened with feathers and flowers and fizzes would set 'om swimming if they were drowned in Lough Lean ; not a bit like Madam Elwin's cronies—the cook maid here by the way, though he's a man, beats Prisey down to beef steaks—and crowding and crowding to wonder at my lady and her 'omplishments. They think her a raal angel, and my lord looking at her with every eye in his head, as if he'd ate her up.—But there's one squinting old divil though that I don't like at all at all, for he's the very moril of lawyer Karwin, only Karwin's eyes are like a beetle's, bright and twinkling, and the Barnight's like a salmon's, glassy and glaring. A Barnight the skeggar, Sir William Morninton if you plase ! fifty-first cousin to my lady, and come in for her title too, because my lady's father (so the steward says) had none but female hares, so this sprateen proves himself a male hare with a right to the title, 'cause there was a tail to it, so he steps in and nabs it by the tail I suppose. But my lady would be in a purty passion if she found I col-lapsed into my old sayings.

The cream of the shanamone is, aunt Chusy, that my lady and Miss Beatrix are own daughters' daughters of your foster-sister, Lady Katrine Conwaye! there's for you now! and I to discover it all from the steward, who had it years ago from Mr. Snider, that good old Swiss, that hindered Madam French of snabbin' me. So the steward, when he found that I was 'quainted with Mr. Snider, would be 'traduced to me, and so we're uncommon thick, and he told me the whole story, with lashins more, that made such a whizzig in my head it bothered me entirely, and all I remember is, that *your* Lady Katrine Conwaye married some foreign Count and had twin daughters; one was my lady's mother, and the other again is my lord's mother—the Dowager, Countess they call her—so my lord and my lady are cousins—grief be far from 'um!—but they do say 'the nearer in kin the nearer to sin.'—Tade told me that, and Tade's as 'cute and as likely a lad, too, as any I have seen in my travels, and you may tell him the same aunt Chusy, to comfort him, and that I have a great esteem for him, and so has my lady, for she says the English arn't half such heartbreakin' folk as the Irish.

"Talk o' your parks, and your plantations," says I, in the servant's hall, "have you mountains?" says I, "running against one another for the bare life, trying which would get to Heaven sooner—bag's tooth flogging 'um out and

out; and waters," says I, "with worlds upon worlds under ground, and weeny, weeny people in 'um, with cockle shells for cocked hats, and salmon bones for swords, and trout scales for spy-glasses," says I. Shasthone! how they blared, like blind Bobby, Miss Mulloy's best calf, that died of the staggers the very day that Molly herself, after calling at Dan Shine's shebeen, tumbled from her pillion and broke her leg.—I was sorrier for poor Bobby than for you, Madam Mulloy; many's the mollyraggin you gave me; I'd never have shown my genus if I had stuck by her; 'twas a darling day I left Dingle, aunt Chusy.—But where was I? for I'll never get on at all at all, if I wander about, this way, and that way, like a frisky filly without a spancil. 'Tis proud enough I and my lord be of my lady, aunt Chusy! 'ticularly with her Turk's robe and her long train brushing the ground, and she after it, like a spread eagle. The steward bothers us about the dowager (the Countess Beatriss they call her, to distinguish her from *my* lady the Countess Kathrine.) "Is she good and gracious like *my* lady?" says I. "Poor and rich all praise her," says he. "And beautiful?" says I. "And beautiful," says he. "And 'complished?" says I. "And 'complished," says he. "She's not so young any ways; there's a good long walk, my jewel, between seventeen and forty." "May your lady go through the pilgrimage without the

trials of the Countess Beatriss," says he. "Try a Countess!" says I, "who'd ever dare to do that?" "One that's no respecer of persons, misfortin, Mrs. Sweeney." "Crossed in love?" says I, "lost her sweetheart may be?" "Worse, worse, husband and child carried off by one with the face of Gabriul and the heart of Molock." "The villain!" says I, "so she runned away with another woman's kith, looking like butter milk all the while, the cheat!" "Cheat indeed," says he; "wanted to chouse my poor lady out of her good name into the bargain, and her fortune too," says he. "The rogue o' the world, sure hanging was too good for her, but go on Mr. Solomon,"—that's the steward's name aunt Chusy,—"go on," says I: so he tells me there was a great trial, all the lawyers in the land jowering and jabbering and cuffing one another, "but the upshot was," says he, "that the poor mother got her child, while the whole warsal world showered shame upon Miss Mornington." "Mornington!" says I, with a screech that made the man 'jump, "that was my lady's name why?" "And sure 'tis your lady's aunt, Sir Philip Mornington's sister, I'm speaking of," says Mr. Solomon. "There's a purty sop for you at the bottom of the saucepan aunt Chusau!" After all 'tis only gammon may be; they know I'm handy, have a knack for illigance and so trumped up a story to make me cotton to the Dancer and quit my own Countess—I'd  
[ ] "Oh, what a chickeen I am! They

think disparaging o' my disarrament, but I'm up to 'um. The folk here seem bewitched by this foreign fly flapper; I engage she's not a pattern upon my mistress, and may I never see KERRY—'tis that would be the cruel scald, and I CHAST—If I don't come to the bottom of this fine story. Speaking o' bottoms, I'm come to the bottom of my 'pistle, so good bye aunt CHAST. Give my love to Jeremiah, and show my letter to Tade, that he may perceive what fine capitals the post-hooks he taught me are turned into.

Ever your loving Niece—JUDITH SWIFT.  
I look in my lexicon for all the long words.

## LETTER VI

[Beatrice Mornington, to Katheren, Countess of Blessingham.]

Dunham Castle.

CHIDE you, my Katheren, chide my absent sister!—Were Katheren present, mayhap I could keenly scan her conduct, scrutinize the motives of her actions, but absent, ah! who can chide an absent friend? when the hasty censure cannot be followed by the kind caress, the heart-cheering smile of conciliation.

We will then abandon retrospect, altogether, and look to the future, with humble confidence; surely your principles are too firmly fixed to prove the sport of circumstance,—will you not keep us in your heart of hearts, nor suffer new attachments to weaken the bonds of early affection?—



trials of the Countess Beatriss," says he. "Try a Countess!" says I, "who'd ever dare to do that?" "One that's no respecter of persons, misfortin, Mrs. Sweeney." "Crossed in love?" says I, "lost her sweetheart may be?" "Worse, worse, husband and child carried off by one with the face of Gabriul and the heart of Molock." "The villain!" says I, "so she runned away with another woman's kith, looking like butter milk all the while, the cheat!" "Cheat indeed," says he; "wanted to chouse my poor lady out of her good name into the bargain, and her fortune too," says he. "The rogue o' the world, sure hanging was too good for her, but go on Mr. Solomon,"—that's the steward's name aunt Chusy,—“go on,” says I: so he tells me there was a great trial, all the lawyers in the land jowering and jabbering and cuffing one another, “but the upshot was,” says he, “that the poor mother got her child, while the whole warsal world showered shame upon Miss Mornington.” “Mornington!” says I, with a screech that made the man jump, “that was my lady’s name why?” “And sure ’tis your lady’s aunt, Sir Philip Mornington’s sister, I’m speaking of,” says Mr. Solomon. “There’s a purty sop for you at the bottom of the saucepan aunt Chusau!” After all ’tis only gammon may be; they know I’m handy, have a knack for illigance and so trumped up a story to make me cotton to this Dowger and quit my own Countess—I’d like that indced, what a chickeen I am! They

think disparaging o' my disarmment, but I'm up to 'um. The folk here seem bewitched by this foreign fly flapper; I engage she's not a patch upon my mistress, and may I never see Kerry—'tis that would be the cruel scald, aunt Chusy—if I don't come to the bottom of this fine story. Speaking o' bottoms, I'm come to the bottom of my 'pistle, so good bye aunt Chusy. Give my love to Jeremiah, and show my letter to Tade, that he may purceive what fine capitals the pot-hooks he taught me are turned into.

Ever your loving Niece—JUDITH SWINNEY.  
I look in my lexicon for all the long words.

## LETTER VI.

[Beatrice Mornington, to Katherine, Countess of Blessingham.]

*Dearest Sister,*

CHIDE you, my Katherine, chide my absent sister!—Were Katherine present, surely I could keenly scan her conduct, scrutinize the motives of her actions, but absent, ah! who can do so? when the kindly countenance, smiling, followed by the kind eye, the reassuring smile of conciliation.

We will then abstain from retrospection, and look to the future, with confidence and courage, surely your principles are too firmly fixed to be the sport of circumstances, and your heart will be true to its own principles, and will be true to the world.

trials of the Countess Beatriss," says he. "Try a Countess!" says I, "who'd ever dare to do that?" "One that's no respecter of persons, misfortin, Mrs. Sweeney." "Crossed in love?" says I, "lost her sweetheart may be?" "Worse, worse, husband and child carried off by one with the face of Gabriul and the heart of Molock." "The villain!" says I, "so she runned away with another woman's kith, looking like butter milk all the while, the cheat!" "Cheat indeed," says he; "wanted to chouse my poor lady out of her good name into the bargain, and her fortune too," says he. "The rogue o' the world, sure hanging was too good for her, but go on Mr. Solomon,"—that's the steward's name aunt Chusy,—"go on," says I: so he tells me there was a great trial, all the lawyers in the land jowering and jabbering and cuffing one another, "but the upshot was," says he, "that the poor mother got her child, while the whole warsal world showered shame upon Miss Mornington." "Mornington!" says I, with a screech that made the man 'jump, "that was my lady's name why?" "And sure 'tis your lady's aunt, Sir Philip Mornington's sister, I'm speaking of," says Mr. Solomon. "There's a purty sop for you at the bottom of the saucepan aunt Chusau!" After all 'tis only gammon may be; they know I'm handy, have a knack for illigance and so trumped up a story to make me cotton to this Dowger and quit my own Countess—I'd like that indeed, what a chickeen I am! They

think disparaging o' my disarmment, but I'm up to 'um. The folk here seem bewitched by this foreign fly flapper; I engage she's not a patch upon my mistress, and may I never see Kerry—'tis that would be the cruel scald, aunt Chusy—if I don't come to the bottom of this fine story: Speaking o' bottoms, I'm come to the bottom of my 'pistle, so good bye aunt Chusy. Give my love to Jeremiah, and show my letter to Tade, that he may purceive what fine capitals the pot-hooks he taught me are turned into.

Ever your loving Niece—JUDITH SWEENEY.  
I look in my lixicon for all the long words.

## LETTER VI.

[Beatrice Mornington, to Katheren, Countess of  
Blessingham.]

Dunane Castle.

CHIDE you, my Katheren, chide my absent sister!—Were Katheren present, mayhap I could keenly scan her conduct, scrutinize the motives of her actions, but absent, ah! who can chide an absent friend? when the hasty censure cannot be followed by the kind caress, the heart-cheering smile of conciliation.

We will then abandon retrospect, altogether, and look to the future, with humble confidence; surely your principles are too firmly fixed to prove the sport of circumstance,—will you not keep us in your heart of hearts, nor suffer new attachments to weaken the bonds of early affection?—

Katheren forgetful!—no, no, she may be won for awhile by the glare of ambition, the gleeing tongue of flattery, but will such delusive meteors be for ever prized beyond the steady radiance of truth?—Will not her heart turn instinctively to that, as to its cynosure?—And we, the forsaken,—how often will fancy image forth your absent form?—How often will that dear face, decked in its joyous smiles, come blithly forward, banishing the pensiveness of regret, changing sighs to smiles, the flush of anxiety to the flutter of hope?

I too, Katheren, am plighted; a promise has passed my lips, as binding, though not as solemn as yours. I am betrothed to my cousin Edward, and he has vowed to me, and to his mother, that he will never take me from her, never! Have I not now a double duty to perform, my own and Katheren's? Shall I not be diligent in cancelling a debt so precious? Shall I not often whisper, "Thus would Katheren soothe!" and then how sweet 'twill be to mark the smile of fond remembrance linger on the face of our loved guardian, to catch the murmured blessing on your name, my dear, dear sister!

I am, now, tenderly welcomed where once—but I had resolved to avoid all reference to aught which might revive past conflicts; you may be required to concentrate the whole power of your mind to meet future trials—let not this supposition alarm; remember you are but seventeen, and a Countess!

Mrs. Susan and Jeremiah have followed us

hither; the gloomy and deserted apartments were viewed by the former with a burst of feeling which I, who am acquainted with her humble history, could pity and appreciate. The story of her life is singularly interwoven with annals of the Dunane family. This castle was the scene of her early and more joyous days, and the after theatre of vicissitudes which darkened her existence.

I often ascend to the lofty battlements, and at times, when the red sun sinks behind the mountains, and the glow of evening yields to the soft shade of twilight, when the silver waters of the lake sparkle in the rays of the rising moon, as if to welcome her mild influence, I fancy myself again at La Motte, again surrounded by the beautiful scenery which witnessed our childish endearments! I sink into a reverie, address my sister, and, startled by the silence which meets my fond enquiry, I call, but she alone responds to the cherished name of, Katheren.

My aunt and Miss St. Elmour met like friends long severed, while I, to whom the history of the latter had been imparted by Doctor Elwin, look on Mary with respect not unmingled with awe. The singular severity of her habits, her monastic dress, the sublime expression of her countenance—looking beyond mortality—the mystery of her religious observances, all conspire to produce a sensation of reverential wonder. At the period of penance, her solitude is strict; not even Father Karwin is permitted to witness the severity of her inflictions. Is

it not singular that a woman so intellectually gifted, should be so governed by superstition as to believe that her voluntary mortifications and abstinences can be effective in purchasing remission for others? And yet, when you behold the saint-like quiet of her unruffled countenance, the type of a mind freed from the perturbation of passion, you can scarcely help believing in the efficacy of those inflictions, or envying her for the credulity which solaces with the fallacious hope, that human atonement can aid redemption.

During the visits of the Elwin family Miss St. Elmour never appears, the doctor alone is admitted to her privacy and confidence; this seclusion of my cousin, at first, caused me to feel constraint and mortification, but satisfied, now, that the mind of Mary St. Elmour is entirely superior to the frivolous formalities of conventional life, I meet my young friends with all the freedom, and more than the ardour of former days, for now our theme is, Katheren. George, while he seems thoroughly to enjoy the exhilaration bestowed by a happy and buoyant temperament, declares the world a blank, society a bore without you; Emma, grateful in proportion to her bliss, refers it all to you, whilst the once severe and petulant Lucy, more than won my pardon for former asperity when, speaking of you yesterday, she ejaculated, with tearful eyes and simple energy, "God bless her!" Thus you find that even in your high estate there is, as yet, no freezing mist to chill the warmth of genuine attachment.

Poor Mrs. Elwin has scarcely recovered from hysterical affection with which she was seized on discovering the rank of her late guest ; her son was seriously alarmed at this unlooked for consequence of his frolic, as he terms it.

To fear that these details of your former companions might prove uninteresting, would be to doubt your heart ; my own little history since we parted is briefly told ; our guardian, Sir Charles Egerton, accompanied Edward to Ireland ; for the first time I met my dear father's earliest and steadiest friend ; in the records of our family he stands distinguished ; the thoughtful and somewhat stern cast of his countenance, which, though moulded in symmetry, seems immovably fixed in stoical solemnity, eyes marked by an expression of severe scrutiny, an air of powerful self-command, a figure upright even to rigidity, all these repulsive attributes might have awed another ; but I saw only the generous supporter of a wronged and destitute woman, and I bent to him with profound respect, but without the slightest sensation of fear, when my aunt, with a look of earnest solicitude, which marked her estimation of his approval, presented me as the child of "poor Philip." He turned from us abruptly, unwilling to betray that emotion the excess of which made tremulous his deep toned voice, as he hastily uttered, "She had a sister, Miriam." What followed consisted principally in a recapitulation of circumstances with which you are already acquainted. It is also unnecessary to communicate





\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





